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CRISIS

BY THE EDITOR

THE FORTNIGHTLY is an independent review without party ties and dedicated only to the preservation of certain standards in public life. If its articles on foreign affairs have firmly opposed the expansionist aims and "gangster" methods pursued by Germany, Italy and Japan during the past six years of reversion to international anarchy, it has certainly not been from any blind prejudice against the National Socialist idea. And if our contributors have, generally, been critical of the action (or inaction) of His Majesty's Government, the attitude taken up—by Pertinax, Sir Arthur Willert, The Hon. Harold Nicolson, and Professor Guglielmo Ferrero, for example—has been commendably free from the catch-cries of the Left and has manifestly been inspired by considerations of the highest national interest. Nevertheless, with the resignation of Mr. Anthony Eden from the Government, and particularly in view of the circumstances which provoked it, it is impossible for us to remain silent.

What are the facts? For months it has been an open secret that the deplorable weakness of British foreign policy, which is the current coin of discussion outside these islands, was due not to insufficiency of armaments but inadequacy of purpose, a confusion of counsel which has enabled Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini by continual and characteristic pivotings of the Berlin-Rome axis to put the National Government "on the spot"—and thereby establish and confirm in the minds of the peoples of Europe this country's decadence. Time and again it has been shown that the patrician elements of our governing class are simply out of their depth in the surging tide of contemporary problems.

Because of a pathetic and abysmal ignorance of the new forces at work—the emergence of the mass-man of which Señor Ortega y Gasset has so brilliantly written, i.e., the ascendancy of the *petite bourgeoisie* with all the limitations of that class—the

older members of the Cabinet have consistently played mouse to the cat of the predatory Powers. With the support of a section of Conservative opinion, which has yet to learn the European alphabet, and with certain elements in the City ever ready to stage the " ballet of the frozen feet," they have apparently allowed themselves to be bulldozed by the preposterous idea that the sole purpose of the rulers of Germany and Italy (to say nothing of Japan) is to save the world from Bolshevism. This sprat has caught so many mackerels that it is hardly surprising to find it the *pièce de résistance* of the German Chancellor's latest speech. Anyone with half an eye can see, however, that the mischief to which Germany and Italy have put their hands in Spain has precious little to do with any ideology; raw materials, minerals and strategic key-points, these are the objects of their intervention in the Spanish schism. The anti-Comintern pact, too, is manifestly no mere shield and sword for use against Russia but, as we said last month, nothing less than an onslaught upon the privileged position of the three major democratic nations, Great Britain, France and U.S.A.

Mr. Eden, to his undying credit, has, with staunch support, be it said, from the Foreign Office, resisted the blackmail policy of German-Italian diplomacy. Above all, by his years of experience abroad he has appreciated the appalling effect on British prestige, indeed on the cause of democracy in general, of the surrender to the policy of blackmail.

To anyone who has had occasion to follow events in Europe in the past decade, indeed since the Peace Conference, it is painfully obvious that Great Britain's failure to learn to " speak European," in M. Briand's pregnant phrase has been the root of all evil. Austria all along has been a test case.

If ever there was a victim of the continuing inter-State anarchy which effectively excludes any healthy national life, it is the orphan Austrian Republic. Because of its beggar's existence at the price of subservience to the interests of foreign capitalists the " independence " of Austria has, of course, been nothing but a diplomatists' fiction. If it was necessary, in order to remove the threat of German *Macht* from the new States carved out of the old Hapsburg Empire in their fledgling years, that the Supreme Council in 1919 should veto the *Anschluss*, it was equally

necessary openly and frankly to recognise that such action was no more and no less than an expression of the traditional doctrine of balance-of-power. And at least the League of Nations should have been formally entrusted with the task of administration of the estate, pending a final settlement, as in the analogous case of the Saar ; otherwise there was no adequate reply to the charge that the Allies, having invoked the principle of self-determination for the Succession States, were deliberately flouting when it cut across their own interests. In the absence of any security-disarmament agreement superseding the old power-politics it was inevitable that sooner or later we should witness an all-in contest of the Great Powers over Austria's prostrate body. Nothing, however, was done to relieve the situation. For obvious historical and economic reasons Austria's future could not be secured without a collaboration of Germany, and there might indeed have been some hope of a gradual adjustment on the lines of a reconstructed Danubian economic system, with Germany obtaining the market which her industry needs, had not Great Britain and France, united only in their negative purpose, imposed their veto on the Customs Union project of 1931. That fateful negative may be said to have set in motion the National-Socialist avalanche throughout central and eastern Europe. And its folly has been only matched by the subsequent criminal negligence of the principal guardians of the 1919 settlement in leaving their ward to the tender mercies of the hereditary foe, Italy. No one who has visited Austria in recent years can have failed to appreciate that, if once the country's destiny was left to be decided by a trial of strength between Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany the outcome of such a " conflict " was a foregone conclusion. No one could fail to notice the almost hypnotic attraction of the personality of Herr Hitler himself, together with the appeal of German strength to Austrian weakness. Yet in spite of the ominous rumblings of the period 1931-34, not a finger was raised by the British Government for a *positive* solution of the problem of Austria, to implement, as with the fundamental security—disarmament problem, the principle of League *guardianship*—as contrasted with the *tutelage* of this or that Great Power. True, the British Government subscribed to a number of solemn

declarations of Britain's interest in the " independence " of Austria and frowned upon sundry German manifestations of the policy of the mailed fist. But there was in practice the same unreadiness to make of the League a useful instrument of peaceful change as there was to provide the essential basis of international security; and Herr Hitler, in an interview with Mr. Edward Price Bell, three years ago, could reasonably say " if the Germany of National Socialism has recourse to power diplomacy the reason is that it lives in a world of power-diplomacy." And meanwhile British public opinion, uninformed and prone to sentimentalize, grew to blame the war-fevered atmosphere of Europe upon France and the so-called *status quo* Powers; forgetting that Great Britain was equally responsible with France for the sorry plight of Austria, for example, since France and her girdle of small States were only given a free hand to establish their power-opposition as a *quid pro quo* for Britain's seizure of German colonies and the destruction of the Germany navy.

Since it was Herr Hitler's successful sabre-rattling at the expense of the unfortunate Dr. Schuschnigg which provoked the present British crisis, it was necessary, we suggest, to place the Austrian question in perspective. But what has been the immediate sequence of events?

To go no further back than last autumn; the achievement of the Nyon anti-piracy patrol, which was essentially Mr. Eden's triumph, was torpedoed—diplomatically speaking—within a fortnight by the forces hostile to him in London, to the consternation, be it said, of all who were following events in Geneva, not excluding the Foreign Office representatives. The next move, which inevitably undermined Mr. Eden's position, was the sudden decision of the Prime Minister to make a " friendly " approach to Herr Hitler over the head of the British Foreign Secretary. Mr. Neville Chamberlain did this against the better judgment of all his advisers and in spite of the complete rebuff which had attended a similar overture to Signor Mussolini in the previous August. The outcome of Lord Halifax's mission to Germany was entirely negative. But the dislocation within the Government which it revealed was sufficient encouragement to the Dictators for them to believe that now they had got the British Cabinet on the run. There followed the " promotion "—

read side-tracking—of Sir Robert Vansittart and further sinister intrigues for a "general settlement" with Germany on the entirely unwarranted assumption that the *Reich* could be bought off by the extension of foreign credits and *ad hoc* Committees of economic co-operation on the basis of the van Zeeland Report.

Finally, after the German weapon had broken in their hands, the same panicky circles, who have no grasp whatsoever of the fundamentals of Europe's situation, traded upon Mr. Chamberlain's innocence to press for a similar "friendly" approach to the Italian Government—again, if necessary, over the head of the Foreign Secretary. Overnight the "gramophone" Press, which had been assuring its readers that a settlement with Signor Mussolini was impossible so long as anti-British broadcasts, renewed piracy in the Mediterranean and continued intervention in Spain were the order of the day, put on the new record—and held out hopes of a return to the Gentleman's Agreement of January, 1937. The evidence of panic counsels was so transparent that Signor Mussolini must have simply chortled with malice.

At this point the Austrian crisis supervened. Dr. Schuschnigg was the victim of a stratagem which can only properly be described as a gangsters' hold-up. Signor Mussolini, naturally, kept his own counsel. Had he not discounted this German-Austrian *Gleichrichtung* ever since the early phase of the development of the Berlin-Rome axis? Thanks to the ostrich-like behaviour of London with regard to the Spanish war he and Herr Hitler had both a far bigger game to play in the Mediterranean and athwart the Atlantic route to the Cape. So, when reminded of their reiterated pledges of Austria's "independence" the spokesmen of British policy could only shamefacedly profess that "they had no information"—or that, without the support of Italy, such declarations were devoid of meaning. After the Abyssinian fiasco this fact was patent, but it had never been openly and candidly admitted; and there were still nuclei of opinion in the various countries of Europe who simply did not believe it to be possible that Britain, the very artificer of balance-of-power principles, should now allow the whole conception to go by default, and watch the Austrian bastion being invested without raising a finger.

Undaunted—indeed, one supposes, hugging the illusion that the Austrian *coup* had disposed Signor Mussolini to welcome friendly advances—Mr. Chamberlain and his advisers proceeded to fall over themselves in their desire to " square " the junior partner of the anti-Comintern firm. Thus, at the umpteenth conversations between Mr. Eden and Count Grandi concerning the withdrawal of Italian " volunteers " from Spain—on February 18th—Mr. Chamberlain was present, and it transpires that, despite an utterly negative response, the Prime Minister was willing to waive all the fundamental points of difference!

It is the effect of yet another surrender to the policy of blackmail which matters. Herr Hitler's success in brutalizing Austria was bound, in any case, to clinch Germany's hegemony in Central and south-eastern Europe. But that, after his speech of defiance on the 20th and especially the taunts directed against Mr. Eden personally, the latter should appear to have been thrown to the "Fascist" wolves is the gravest element of the whole situation.

No wonder Mr. Eden, for once taking the offensive, should have thrown out his appeal to " the younger generation " at the Birmingham conference of the Junior Imperial League. There are millions of men and women of all parties and of no party who will echo his *cri de cœur* of ' peace not only in our time but in yours '—which means, as he said, " no sacrifice of principles and no shirking of responsibilities merely to obtain quick results that may not be permanent . . ." By their last act, as by so many others, the "monstrous regiment of old women" at present disposing of Britain's destinies stand self-condemned. To "drop the pilot" at this juncture reveals a complete failure to understand the imponderables of the European situation.

The present writer belongs to that growing number of Englishmen which, in fact, wins every election—and is not represented in Parliament. Whether or not the present *désarroi* in British policy causes a new general election in the near future, one thing is certain : the emergence, and the entry into power, sooner or later, of a generation which, appreciating what is at stake, will steadfastly maintain "a more positive attitude by this country in Europe" (*cf* the statement issued after the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House on February 17th) thus upholding those principles of ordered freedom for which Mr. Anthony Eden stands.

AGRICULTURAL POLICY

By Professor R. G. Stapledon,

THE outstanding lesson to be learned from the various expedients adopted during recent critical years to save agriculture from bankruptcy is this : that apparently straightforward projects entail the most complicated, far-reaching, and in many of their ramifications unexpected, not to say undesirable, consequences. A corollary to this statement is that every change brought about in the production and handling of commodities must eventually react upon the land itself for good or for ill. Now practically all recent Government policy, up to the lime and slag policy and save for the de-rating of agricultural land, has been concerned solely and exclusively with commodities. Every one of these policies has, however, automatically had some influence on the land : what that influence was likely to be it has been nobody's concern to try and prognosticate. The commodities in question, moreover, would necessarily be produced by a variety of methods.

Herein lies the inherent weakness of all short-term policies (invariably based on commodities), indeed of all policies based on commodities as such—the finished article. Here is the urban mind, triumphantly led by the economists, at work cheerfully supposing that agriculture can be dealt with in terms of the factory, the raw material, and the finished product. The cold fact is that nothing can be produced in the agricultural "factory" without also constantly influencing the very substance and basic structure of the factory itself, while, for that matter, it is quite impossible to make a real distinction between factory and raw material, or in many instances between raw material and finished product. All movement on a well-organized farm goes in circles : in a factory movement proceeds along straight lines, bifurcating and deviating perhaps, but always in straight lines. These are the fundamental and

irreconcilable differences between agriculture and manufacture, and the realization of these differences must necessarily be the only mental foundation upon which it is possible to think out the essentials of a stable long-term policy for agriculture. The factory—and the soil is the *real* factory (highly unstable and ever changing though it be)—must be looked after continuously and kept up to a proper standard of efficiency. What standard? That is the first question to be settled. By merely asking this question we are at once set off on the right lines, for we must next ask, what, precisely, in the interest of the nation at this time and at all times, do we expect our soil, that is to say the land of this country, to do for us?

It follows that in framing a long-term policy for agriculture the first thing to do is to look ahead and to endeavour to form a correct estimate of the most menacing of possible eventualities. There are three: war, the threatened rapid fall in birth-rate and the unlikelihood of overseas countries being able to supply us with food as cheaply and as abundantly as heretofore. Of these three dangers decreasing population is probably by far the most serious. Without thinking of war, and without taking an exaggerated view of the importance to mankind of the British peoples, half a dozen cogent reasons spring to mind why a diminished population would be a first-class catastrophe to the people contributing to it. The population problem is of prime urgency, because, if the threatened danger is to be met, action must be taken at once. It is a reasonable hypothesis to put forward, and only reasoned speculation is here possible, that a contented rural population would rear larger families than even a contented urban population. Accept this proposition—and there is evidence in favour of its acceptance—and it is evident that the first cornerstone in our agricultural policy would have to be to ensure as large and as contented a rural population as possible. Great emphasis is to be laid on *contented*; this implies that there must be no undue disparity between rural and urban wages and housing conditions. Indeed that this disparity should be immediately brought to an end is probably the most urgent need of rural Britain to-day.

War! The last war taught us the dangers and the immense expense involved in not being agriculturally prepared. To-day,

on balance, and for the sake of argument, let it be granted that we are less vulnerable than we were in 1917 : even so, no living man dare prognosticate how we shall stand ten or twenty years hence in relation to scientific developments in the arts of destruction and of killing. In order then to frame our long-term policy is is necessary to decide in advance what commodities in particular will be required, and in what relative proportion to each other during the stress of war—and this chiefly in the interest ensuring adequate soil fertility for war needs.

Owing to the very real menace of soil erosion and of soil depletion methods of husbandry abroad must substantially change, costs of production are likely steadily to rise, to the disadvantage of the British housewife and to the advantage of the home farmer, while certain commodities may actually go scarce sooner than we expect. He who eventually shoulders the task of framing a long-term policy for British agriculture must assuredly hold all the long-term contingencies here enumerated clearly in mind.

What are the needs of to-day ? First and foremost that we should produce here at home enough of such foods as must be eaten fresh. This matter of fresh food has both its immediate and its longer period significance. The biochemist has only just begun his work. In the first place freshness is a relative term, on the one hand it may very likely be found that eggs and vegetables, and perhaps many other commodities, to be of maximum health value should be eaten fresher than anybody thinks they should, while other commodities not now put in the " fresh " class may eventually have to be so placed. After freshness as such must be placed the whole question of quality, quality considered primarily from the point of view of human health. There remains a great deal of definition to be done relative to quality. But the immediate point is that agricultural methods are likely to need revision when *quality* rather than *cheapness* dominates the outlook of mankind.

The question of the agricultural population is urgent from the point of view of the immediate needs of agriculture, let alone any expansion. By some it is argued that in view of the rapid developments in mechanization we are far from having attained to maximum output per man. Even so, the higher the production, whatever the methods, relatively the greater the

employment in the country: the more animals to be looked after, larger harvests to be moved about on and off the farm, the greater the transportation of fertilizers, and of "finished" products. The last word, however, has certainly not been said—far from it—as to the economic size of holdings and as to the amount of labour that could be fruitfully employed on holdings of various types and sizes. We are, moreover, a long way from having attained to the high-water mark in the production of vegetables, and eggs and livestock products in general, which are susceptible only to a certain amount of mechanization.

To argue that agriculture can no longer be the basis for a reasonably large rural population is manifestly ridiculous; such an argument is tenable only if it can be proved that it is to the country's advantage now and always to grow the absolute minimum of food for itself.

British agricultural policy, then, must be one that, firstly, ensures a large rural population, and, secondly, that maintains the maximum acreage of the country in a condition capable of high production. It would seem important to lay emphasis on "a condition suitable for high production" rather than on any particular commodity. In the first place peace and war if not actually calling for different commodities call for different proportions between commodities. World conditions are in such a state of flux, and scientific developments so rapid, that there is no guarantee of supplies of any particular commodity being cheaper, or in some cases more plentiful, from overseas sources than from home production at any give date within the next twenty to fifty years. As to certain commodities we should immediately work up to optimum output for the health of the nation in respect of milk, vegetables and possibly eggs also, and, maybe, quality meat as well.

In short, a sane long-term policy must be one which is as interested in what the country could grow "next" year, as in what it is actually growing "this" year, and behind the framing of the policy must be the acute realization that the country cannot grow the maximum of any set of commodities unless there is enough fully trained labour on the land to do so, and unless there are enough farmers mentally, technically and mechanically equipped for cultivation and for high production.

This paper is only concerned with the essentials of a sane long-term agricultural policy: whether the country is sufficiently alive to the dangers ahead to make the necessary changes in policy in order to render it possible, and before it is too late, to launch a real agricultural and rural policy is another matter.

The essentials, let it be repeated, are farmers, men and acres—fertile acres to boot! Mr. Christopher Turnor, than whom nobody has a wider experience of agricultural conditions, has recently and forcefully urged the need of exhaustive inquiry. All said and done, in the last resort everything comes down to men and acres. In the absolute sense at the present time, and for some time to come, men are not limited. Acres in a small country with a large population making all manner of agricultural and non-agricultural calls on its land surface are exceedingly limited. To-day then, and in any event for several generations, acres are the master factor in the whole situation. How stand we for acres, and upon what lines is it desirable to conduct exhaustive inquiries into the quantity and quality of available acres? To this, the basic factor, the closing portion of our brief review will be devoted.

At the outset let us remind ourselves—here we are permitting ourselves, and legitimately enough in this case, an industrial analogy—that when Britain started on her re-armament the greatest difficulties and the greatest delays were connected with the setting up of factories and the accumulation of raw material; in short, with problems equivalent to the obtaining of acres for agricultural development. More than this, re-armament has been greatly concerned with acres in their solid and spatial reality. Factory sites, the bespoiling of agricultural land for the winning of minerals, training grounds, camps, munition dumps, all in the aggregate making heavy annual inroads on agricultural land, and not infrequently on some of the very best of agricultural land. All this, moreover, on top of the heavy and ill-co-ordinated raids that for the last twenty years and more urban and industrial developments have been making on Land.

The first thing to be found out is what exactly has been and what is likely to be the annual increment of all this commandeering. In recent years it has certainly exceeded 50,000 acres and is probably now not far short of 100,000 acres per annum. The

second need is to formulate a sound basis for assessing the optimum use of land—of all land, of every parcel of land.* When we come to such land as the urban-ravager, and the suppositious necessities of defence leave over for agriculture, we have to regard maximum need in the interest of soil fertility and general agricultural utility as of greater immediate moment than optimum use in respect of the production of any particular crop. We must then schedule our acres, first in relation to optimum use from the point of view of all the purposes to which land can be put, and then schedule the agricultural residue in terms of maximum need (in relation to soil fertility and general agricultural utility, let it be again emphasized) and in terms of potential rather than of actual present optimum use.

Need and potential use, then, are to be our criteria, and our guiding principles, in obtaining information leading to the formulation of a sane agricultural policy. This implies that information is urgently needed, not so much as to the acreage in the several crops and as to the yield and excellence of the crops (this our statistics give us), but as to how these crop acreages are disposed of in relation to systems of farming, and then how different systems of farming react upon first, soil fertility, and secondly, flexibility in commodity production. Data on ploughability and equipment are perhaps the most essential of all.

Systems of farming in relation to soil, flexibility and equipment in this country I shall presume to define as follows :

Arable. When the plough and crop cultivation is taken over practically the whole of the farm :

(*a*) When leys† do not contribute to the rotation of crops;

(*b*) When leys of no longer than two years' duration contribute to the rotation, and when the area in leys does not exceed one-sixth of the land under cultivation.

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*The argument here developed and the terminology employed are in sympathy with —and an extension of—the thesis propounded by Lord Bledisloe over a year ago, and amplified by Mr. G. M. Young in a recent letter to *The Times*.

†The meaning and the significance of the ley must be clearly understood. A ley is a field sown down to grass and such as will be left down to grass—ideally at all events—for a pre-defined and definite number of years, one, two, . . . four, . . . six, and seldom more than twelve. The underlying idea is grass as a crop, but equally important is the ploughed down sod in relation to the enhancement and maintenance of soil fertility. The ley, properly understood and properly employed, has more to contribute to flexibility and soil fertility, and therefore is a more important factor influencing a sane long-term agricultural policy than any other single crop.

These systems properly conducted constitute high farming: they entail full equipment for crop production but not necessarily for animal production; they maintain, or are capable of maintaining, soil fertility at a high level and permit of great flexibility at short notice. They are, however, easily abused. Only a limited area of the country is adapted to these systems. What area of each, having regard to modern knowledge, cheap fertilizers and modern machinery?

Permanent Grass.—When the whole farm is in grass and the plough is never used; no cropping. The number of such farms ill-managed and on poor to very poor permanent grass full of weeds is far in excess of those well managed. The productivity of our permanent grass farms as a whole is lower in relation to potentialities, and the soil less cared for in relation to need, than is the case with other of the systems we adopt. This system makes heavier calls on imported feeding stuffs in relation to potentialities for the production of winter rations on the farms than any other. Much of the dairy farming as now practised on permanent grass is such as totally to ignore both the optimum use and maximum need of the fields of the farm.

Nondescript.—When one portion of the farm, frequently less than one-third, is kept under rotation and the remainder in permanent grass. Taking the country as a whole the preponderant acreage would probably be found to be under this system. Within obvious limitations there is scope for high farming under this system, but the average of achievement in relation to potentialities is lamentably low. This system, even in the hands of the worst practitioners, ranks higher than the all-permanent grass system, because cultivation if only in an undertone is not a lost art, and the farm itself at least contributes something more than inferior hay to the winter ration.

Alternate Husbandry. i.e., when the plough is taken in rotation over all the ploughable fields of the farm. This system is based on the ley. The fields actually in leys at any time may vary from about 25 per cent. to over 80 per cent. of the whole farm. Properly conducted this system builds up fertility more rapidly and more certainly than any except the highest arable farming. The grass from the leys will be weed-free, highly nutritious and available for a greatly extended grazing season.

The system is supremely flexible, its practitioners are necessarily informed stock-masters and skilled cultivators. They are equipped for both animal and crop husbandry.

As to the gross acreage and the number of farms devoted to each system, although some of the data necessary for classification are available, far too many are totally lacking. Anything approaching an accurate statement is utterly impossible.

To have accurately mapped the country in terms of these systems is a basic necessity from the points of view alike of formulating a long-term policy and taking reasoned measures in respect of war danger.

Look at the matter how we will, it is the acreage under permanent grass that always has been and always must be the mirror which reflects our progress away from or towards a sane long-term policy for agriculture. We have not yet begun to move forward. To-day as never before we have the technical and mechanical equipment available to leap forward at the very first signs of dawning national sanity, and we have the experience of men like Hosier and a number of far-seeing pioneers who have grasped the significance of modern developments and—who thanks to initiative nowhere surpassed in the sphere of progressive enterprise—have forged, or shown that it is easily possible to forge, the appropriate methods of farm practice.

Put quite tersely the basic principle that must underlie our policy can only be a striving to eliminate as far as absolutely possible nondescript and permanent grass farming from our agricultural practices. High arable farming should be in progress on all situations suitable for it, and alternate husbandry —ley farming in short—on all the rest of the country that *can be farmed*. It is farmers that the country wants, for " to be a farmer " is to " cultivate the land."

We have now brought our argument to a single issue. How many acres of Great Britain can *not* be farmed, or ought not, in the interest of agriculture itself, to be farmed. How many acres, that is to say, is it both necessary and legitimate to leave in permanent grass ? It is to be conceded that a few fields in permanent grass may be necessary in some circumstances both to the arable and to the ley farmer, and it may be legitimate to

keep a small proportion of the very best permanent grass (a small acreage anyway) intact.

In a paper read in London on May 13th, 1936,* the writer brought forward a considered estimate to show that in England and Wales of permanent grass, completely deteriorated long leys and of rough grazings below the 1,500 ft. contour there were something of the order of 16¼ million acres of land in relation to potentialities more or less neglected and much of it absolutely derelict. No less an area than 43 per cent of the land surface of England and Wales by no manner of means pulling its weight in the interest of food production.

To-day, such is our lack of reliable evidence, it is impossible to say how large a proportion of that 16¼ million acres could be brought under arable or ley farming—how much, in short, is ploughable and ought to be ploughed. The amount is probably not short of 8 million acres, and may well be in excess of that.

To sum up and to conclude. The basis of a permanent and stable agricultural policy must necessarily be sought for in terms of farmers, men and acres. When we say farmers we mean men equipped for and conversant in the arts of cultivation and crop production. In absolutes, since this is a small country with a large population, acres are the ultimate limiting factor. Therefore, the basic consideration is that of the acres in their qualitative and quantitative aspects, and consequently the first necessity in an approach towards a long-term policy for agriculture is to ascertain where we stand as to acres, and how we stand in respect of systems of farming appropriate to those acres. Remembering that a system of farming is only appropriate if it holds a just balance between optimum use of the fields (in terms of healthy food fit for humans to eat) and maximum need in respect of soil fertility—and if it is also flexible. These are hard sayings, doubly hard because true, and they are sayings that cut deep into all the political and economic tenets that have dominated the thought of this country for a hundred years and more.

*See "The Case for Land Improvement and Reclamation." J. Roy. Soc. Arts. Vol. lxxxiv. July, 1936.

BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN BALANCE

By Lionel M. Gelber.

INSIDE Europe a free hand for herself, outside Europe a free hand for Great Britain—this, in sum, is the substance of Germany's vision, a clue perhaps not only to what is in the front of her mind but to what may also be at the back of her policy. Now in a world progressively shorn of collective safeguards British, as well as German, calculations must at bottom be founded on elements of individual and associated power. For nothing less is at stake than the European balance. It is no easy task to turn down Germany on disputed grounds of national honour or international morality alone. There is a deep-rooted feeling in Great Britain that because of the way she was handled after 1918 she must be treated with indulgence now, that, however reprehensible her conduct at home and abroad, amends have yet to be made to her. No doubt the argument flies to an extreme when it condones the sinister error, so fatal alike to European order and the British Commonwealth, that race, nationality and the State must be co-extensive; when, as though neither Masaryk nor Benes, Dolfuss nor Schuschnigg, had ever existed, it invokes exclusively in Germany's favour the blessed name of self-determination; and when, so irrational are the emotions aroused, the odd spectacle is furnished of Wilsonian idealism harnessed to the rule of the strong. But what has yet to be explained is why, if it be true that the *status quo* in Europe inhibits unjustly a people so virile and so dynamic as the Germans, this complaint should be applied more seldom to the Far East where, for reasons akin to their discontent with the post-war treaties, the Japanese are demonstrating how such notions work in practice.

The problem is no new one. From the days of the Tudors to those of Louis XIV, from Bonaparte to the Emperor William II, it has been a cardinal maxim of British policy to insist upon

the free passage of the Narrow Seas, to keep the Low Countries out of hostile hands and to oppose the domination of Europe by any single aggressive Power or group of Powers. During the Victorian era matchless naval strength and unchallengeable industrial supremacy gave Great Britain a measure of detachment from Continental dissensions and the age-old struggle between Gaul, Teuton and Slav; to the very last Salisbury harboured what Joseph Chamberlain perceived was already obsolete, the luxury conception of the British rôle as *la puissance médiatrice*. In the twentieth century the issue was again faced squarely first by Lansdowne and then by Grey; the military superiority of Germany disturbed them before her naval aspirations widened the gulf irrevocably. Then came 1914-18, the invasion of Belgium and France, Europe in flames, the grim fulfilment of everything Lansdowne and Grey had feared and foreseen. The lesson of those years has not, however, been forgotten. In 1936 when Germany violated the Locarno Treaty Great Britain extended to Belgium and France military guarantees, exact commitments (modified and renewed a year later) which the pre-war Entente did not possess and clear testimony to her dependence in the present as in the past on the European equilibrium.

But does it suffice merely to be content with what Lord Baldwin has called our frontier on the Rhine? Is it not an illusion to think that Great Britain can withdraw securely behind Anglo-French ramparts while Germany imposes her ruthless will everywhere else in Europe? Yet beneath the attempt to induce France to drop all her Eastern commitments—which might indirectly involve Great Britain in war across the Rhine—lies the conviction that as recompense for their Western immunity the Franco-British Entente should encourage or at least assent to German ascendancy in Bohemia, Austria and beyond. Divided counsels in Great Britain are worth an army corps to Germany, and this theory has strong backing. What its adoption must entail is plain enough. Temporarily removing one peril it would create another even more deadly in the end. Accorded a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe,—and that is what the new arrangement with Austria may well mean—Germany could build a power so immense and so irresistible that in turn the West will

be entirely at her mercy. The brilliant sweep of her conquests and arms from 1866 to 1918, her key-position at the heart of the continent, her interior lines of communication, her genius for organization, her national character and mentality—none of these can be left out of account. And if Sadowa preceded Sedan the interval between them was short.

Of the two barriers on Germany's south-eastward path one is less rigid than the other. Austria, moreover, is not only more vulnerable, strategically and diplomatically, than Czechoslovakia but, if she breaks under the weight brought to bear by her great neighbour from within and from without her borders, the Czechs would in any case be encircled—deserted by the disaffected section of the Sudeten minority, their further political independence automatically untenable. *Realpolitik* must turn friendships no less than enmities to account, and the main key to the gates of Vienna has hitherto reposed in Rome. On it, however, Mussolini's grip is visibly relaxing. To-day with German sympathy Italy has given such large hostages to fortune, is so impoverished by her Abyssinian and Spanish adventures, so entangled outside Central Europe with France and Great Britain, that the Italo-German agreement of 1936 about Austria has been shown to be rather a broken need. For the famous axis is not an Italian weapon but a German bar behind which is confined the prisoner of Rome.

More almost than anything else what must influence the European balance for good or ill are the relations of Moscow with the Western capitals. To Hitlerian diplomacy the fiction that between the ideologies of Right and Left there can be no middle way has been an undeniable asset; shielded by the anti-Communist crusade Germany has obtained latitude that would have been incredible before 1914 to pursue traditional and purely national designs of European power. Yet in determining the British attitude towards Berlin and Moscow alike the governing factor can no longer be political theory or moral judgment but the map of Europe; geography has decreed, and history teaches, that the rise of an ambitious, eruptive Power nearby is an immeasurably greater hazard to the British Isles than the machinations of one that is both more self-contained and more remote. By every dispassionate calculation of power-

politics if Russia and the Anglo-French Entente have similar interests in Central and Eastern Europe they may, in a spirit not of mutual esteem but of common exigency, be expected to stand together. What Moscow no less than London has to decide is whether, granting that they possess such interests, they are disposed again to collaborate in their support.

Russia's pacts of non-aggression, her entry into the League of Nations and her treaties of mutual assistance with France and Czechoslovakia were a natural response to the demagogic rattle of the Hitlerian sabre. By some English champions of the new *Drang nach Osten* Russo-German tension has been regarded as not altogether unfortunate; if the Soviet and the Third Reich were embroiled against each other the rest of Europe might breathe more freely. But the plain fact is that before Germany could make inroads in southern Russia or annex the Ukraine the whole of Central and Eastern Europe must come into her grasp; and if that happened the German shadow would lie as heavily over the West as over the East. And what if Russia herself suffers a change of heart? Noting sardonically the triumphs of Italo-German diplomacy in the Abyssinian, Locarno and Spanish controversies she may wonder whether she will not be left by the Western Powers with most of the burden of stemming the eastward Nazi tide; whether—the remilitarization of the Rhineland being here a critical point—without them it is one she can or should bear; whether in such a case antagonism even to Hitler is really worth her while. And should Russia, sceptical of the value of further co-operation with Great Britain and France (although it has contributed weightily to the European balance and therefore to her own advantage), now conclude that her best line of defence is, after all, her own frontier, would not the German task be enormously simplified?

Where bluster fails smoother accents may succeed. Divested of its ideological trappings, Hitler's truculent effort to expel Russia from the councils of Europe is an endeavour to isolate her so as to hamstring collective security, impair the French system, weaken Czechoslovakia and set in train that mastery of the Danubian basin which must be the foundation of his continental power. But may not events in the Far East slowly evoke a drastic revision of policy? So long as there was a prospect of

simultaneous Japanese pressure on Asiatic Russia some Nazis could toy with grandiose projects of taking in their stride along with the smaller Eastern States the outer fringes of the Soviet—although British neutrality and the use of Polish soil for the German legions might also have been essential. But to these plans does not Japan's large-scale war in China constitute a rebuff as shattering as it was unexpected? For the more her blood and treasure are poured out below the Great Wall the lower must sink her stock in any well-timed anti-Russian enterprise. Thus Russia, despite the execution of Tukhachevsky and his colleagues, despite the loss of her most talented military leaders—and the closer unity of the high command with the *régime* may in itself be adequate compensation—is much more secure than she was a year ago; the threat of a joint German-Japanese onslaught correspondingly less real. And, for the moment, in this sense, too, China's anguish is to some extent the price of Europe's peace. But must Germany forswear her cherished aims altogether because Japan has embarked on war in the cause of Japanese rather than German expansion? A military understanding with Tokio being ruled out, would not a political understanding with Moscow serve her more limited purposes better?

The *Reichswehr* at least may think so and (Ministerial predilections notwithstanding) they have still a great part to play. Certainly it would enable them to deal with Poland as they had originally intended or with less danger of paralysing interference turn at once south-eastward where much awaits them before Russian soil is even touched. On the Rapallo policy they have always looked with favour, and the treaty which Germany first signed with Russia in 1922 was not only renewed in 1933 by Hitler himself but in spite of the subsequent anti-Soviet campaign has never been denounced. The *Reichswehr* and the Red Army have a long record of fellowship, while German capitalists might again desire opportunities they previously enjoyed in developing Soviet industry. Whatever the ideological pretext, Hitler has tried to sever the tie between Russia, Czechoslovakia, France and the League of Nations for strategic reasons with which every German statesman since Bismarck has been painfully familiar; the West not being intimidated by the *furor teutonicus* and the

wire to the Kremlin having never irreparably been cut he may undertake to gain his ends at Moscow itself. And neither for the Soviet nor for the Third Reich would that mean a more startling metamorphosis in foreign policy than others they have undergone; before Hitler's pact with Pilsudski the relations of Germany with Poland seemed as irremediably bad as they now do with Russia. Since Bismarck's day Germany has always strengthened the chain of her own "encirclement"; if she jettisons her policy of encircling the Soviet she may break a link which she forged against herself. With Japan engrossed more than ever in China and with Italy's gaze fixed overseas it is the Western Powers rather than Moscow who have most to yield to the so-called counter-League of Rome, Berlin and Tokio. In China and Central Europe alike the ultimate political and economic interests of Germany are not those of her present associates; by a union of forces she must help them—as they must help her—to extort from Great Britain and France more than they could each have procured alone in order to offset discrepancies which render their combination fundamentally so unstable. A fit alignment for power-diplomacy at London and Paris, the impermanent triangular coalition is not an insuperable obstacle between Berlin and Moscow.

What then British opinion must appreciate is that Russia dwells under no inescapable obligation to support the European balance. Even now it is not improbable that her reawakening nationalism, with an eye to the enemies by whom she is encompassed, can in some degree be traced to disappointment at the poor fruits of collaboration with Western internationalism. And if Hitler provoked the emergence of Soviet diplomacy from its comparative seclusion he also can purchase its retirement to something like its former state.

In these circumstances the British objective should be clear. The European equipoise to be maintained at all must be steady at both ends. It is the policy of the British Government to circumvent ideological groupings, to work irrespective of internal *régimes* with every Power bent upon peace; and what is sauce for the German goose is sauce for the Russian gander. For by repudiating the League of Nations the Rome—Berlin—Tokio camp have created that which Great Britain seeks to

dispel; between Russia and the West, however, so long as she is represented at Geneva, the machinery for co-operation remains. The Soviet may still prefer to avoid dependence on German goodwill, and it would be a blunder of the first magnitude if Anglo-French diplomacy allowed that preference to wither in exasperation and despair. To emasculate the Covenant so that Russia as well as the smaller Eastern States could rely no longer on any form of collective security may be further to push them one by one into Hitler's arms; and if the Soviet pacts with France and Czechoslovakia were deprived of all substance the process would only be accelerated. Just as Grey and his contemporaries, beset with the overweening pretensions of Germany, could not afford to perpetuate Anglo-Russian misunderstanding, so neither can the British Government to-day. There is no question of a fastidious choice between rival creeds or of deciding whether or not the Soviet tyranny outstrips the worst iniquities of the Tsardom. In every way save one Great Britain and Germany had more in common before the War than Great Britain and Russia; in every way save one the same may even be true again. But that one exception was and is crucial. The disappearance from European politics of the Russian counterpoise would mean that the Third Reich had achieved a goal for which Imperial Germany strove in vain. So dire a setback, unless the balance of power has lost its importance for Great Britain, unless geography is a snare and history a delusion, it is now the business of British statesmanship to do what it can to prevent.

If there is no Russian withdrawal and the French system does not wholly dissolve, Czechoslovakia may face the future with renewed confidence. As for Austria, the weakest of the dykes against the surging German flood, her fate is necessarily influenced by British relations with yet another Great Power. Of that point indeed Mr. Baldwin's Government seem, during the Italo-Ethiopian crisis, to have been fully aware; it looks like being the trump card up Mussolini's sleeve at present. For the vindication of the Covenant in 1935, even if collectively feasible, might not only have hastened the collapse of Italy but also—with the relics of the League providing a battered trophy for a further Hitlerian triumph—have expedited the surrender to

Germany of Central Europe. Ironic as it may now appear the fact is that on the European continent Great Britain and Italy are natural allies. Signor Mussolini must know perfectly well that his vigil on the Brenner is an Anglo-French interest which cannot endure if his *régime* crumbles and chaos ensues; the British, on the other hand, knowing equally well that he dare not forfeit Italy's European position, refuse to pay him for what is, after all, his primary duty to his own country. It is a trial of strength, one in which, if unduly prolonged, neither of the contestants but Hitler will be the winner. A fillip to his prestige, concrete advantages to embody it—these are Mussolini's immediate requirements. For, unless he is soon to find himself in complete vassalage to Berlin with scarcely equivalent gains elsewhere, a settlement from Great Britain and France must be extracted at an early date.

If there is a Franco-British deal with Italy what becomes of the Covenant, the rule of law, the decencies of international life? Perhaps it is no mere question of letting justice be done, though the Mediterranean heavens fall. For Geneva to insist unavailingly upon the restoration of one primitive African State may be to fail while yet there is time to preserve the freedom of others in Europe itself. Will conscience be salved, the decencies of international life upheld, will the Covenant, the rule of law be in a healthier condition when most of Central and Eastern Europe is converted into a German province? And, even from an ideological point of view, it must be accounted a feeble victory for democracy if Fascism gives way simply to enhance Nazi predominance. For here is no clean-cut decision between right and wrong but a choice of the lesser evil. There are those who distinguish between a British policy founded on the Covenant and one guided by the principle of the balance of power. Whether or not the contrast was once valid it is in the circumstances of to-day a false antithesis, a total misconception of the necessities of the case. Only by maintaining the balance of power can Great Britain and France support a European order in which the ideals of the League may somehow linger and in some happier hour even flourish again. If the equilibrium is demolished, the League goes irretrievably and much else besides.

Conducted with prudence and skill British diplomacy may yet steer mankind away from disaster. Ceaselessly and impressively the mounting armaments and deepening friendships of Great Britain tend to repair her damaged authority. That, despite the high-flown insolence of Japan in the Far East, matters nearer home come first, the concentration of the fleet in and about European waters abundantly indicates. Nor are further continental commitments, of which public opinion might not approve, wholly indispensable. In the present situation uncertainty about British intentions may serve as a deterrent to German expansion only less effective than formal but impracticable iron-clad guarantees. There are circumstances in which imprecision is the bane of international negotiation; there can be circumstances in which it may prove a tower of strength. The mere fact that Hitler has always sought an understanding with Great Britain, of which the premise would be that she disinterest herself in Central and Eastern Europe, shows that unless he gets it he is afraid to move. So long as Great Britain withholds her consent to a free hand, there will be a haunting dread at Berlin that she may in any ultimate crisis intervene. And if Germany remembers the kind of mistake about Great Britain that was made in 1914, the indefinite, the unpredictable nature of the British attitude in an emergency should keep alive in German calculations a saving anxiety not to repeat it.

Herr Hitler, may of course, take a chance on the British love of peace. The danger will be intensified if important sections of the public mind in Great Britain, by finding excuses for him in advance, incite him, as they often do, to some reckless action; if, too, at critical junctures Ministers themselves hamper their own diplomatic influence by saying gratuitously that they will not run the risk of war. It may be so, but why say it? A studied vagueness which will keep Hitler guessing cannot add to the perils confronting Central and Eastern Europe; it might, the potential threat of British participation being what it is, keep them in abeyance. The special Entente problem of July—August, 1914, will not again arise—not, at any rate, in the same shape; the Anglo-French military guarantees of 1936-37 are explicit and comprehensive. But the people and Parliament of Great Britain still retain the liberty to decide on

the merits of each case elsewhere in Europe as it occurs. To barter away that liberty might be to bring about the very predicament that it must be the supreme object of British policy avert.

Nor will the growth of English-speaking solidarity—sympathy with Great Britain in the Dominions and the United States alike—have a negligible effect on the chancelleries of Europe. Experience indeed should warn Berlin that here, too, is another unknown quantity with which it would be foolhardy not to reckon. For much that has happened since the Treaty of Versailles, Great Britain and the United States are apt to blame each other ; in any final crisis what draws them closer is a view of human society which transcends every difference, however pronounced, of outlook, geography and tradition. And Great Britain must make the most of this fact even though, in the absence of continuous collaboration such as is feasible with France, British policy may of necessity resort to disillusioning compromises. Properly understood it is a vital interest of the United States, as of the British Commonwealth as a whole, that Great Britain should be able to maintain the European equilibrium, for with it is bound up not only her own security and independence but the distribution of power all the world over. At a time of profound disquiet it is a heartening sign of their faith and temper that in free countries on both sides of the Atlantic so many voices should clamour for a common ideological front dedicated to the defence of democracy ; a programme which contemplates improved relations with the Russian and Italian dictatorships, if not utterly repugnant, assuredly must exercise less popular appeal. To buttress the continental balance may none the less be the sole means of upholding an international order in which the democratic institutions of both Western Europe and the New World can safely survive to await the dawn of a better day. For what the morrow will bring no man can tell, but if the unity of the English-speaking peoples stands unshaken and infuses into the diplomacy of peace reserves of strength as vast as they are undefined, the politics of war may yet be overawed.

THE MISCHIEF IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

By Air-Commodore L. E. O. Charlton

THE British Government's policy of non-intervention in Spain is now much better understood on all sides. It is recognized that first of all the expedient was devised to restore a civil character to the Spanish Civil War; and later, when its international significance was unmistakable, the policy was persisted in to prevent the local conflict overspreading and becoming a European conflagration. Our armaments were low, a fact which was only too apparent during the Abyssinian crisis, and we were in no shape to defend ourselves if war did come. And yet in doing so we overlooked a possibility as regards the outcome of the struggle which contains the seeds of a danger to the Empire as great as any it has ever had to face. We overlooked the consequence to the British imperium, and the effect on an already complicated Mediterranean situation, should General Franco win the war.

The precise part which this inland waterway, 1927 miles in length from Gibraltar to Port Said, plays in our Imperial economy is perhaps not wholly understood. Since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 we know it mostly as a short-cut route by sea to India and the Far East. Since the coming of commercial aviation we recognize its intimate connection with air transport in the chain of Imperial communications, and how its use in this respect reinforces air power. And now, later still, we hear of the two ports, Tripoli and Haifa, at its eastern end as pipe-line terminals for Iraq oil. This is not quite the sum total of our general knowledge on the subject, for there are the key-points on the high road to consider, Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus, together with Egypt where we must still maintain a garrison. But in the main it is as an arterial highway that we regard it, for commerce mostly, with natural sentry-posts along the route, and men-of-war patrols, to ensure its protection.

That, however, is not the half of the Mediterranean's real importance in our Imperial scheme. If it ceased to be a through way safe for use it would be no difficult matter to deroute all cargo vessels round the Cape. With the exception of oil very few necessities are imported from countries on its seaboard, and as for that commodity less than 15 per cent. of our total requirement originates either in Black Sea or in Mediterranean ports. As for our garrisons, are they not well situated to defend themselves, and would not the activities of the Navy be a further shield and guard? On the face of it war with a Mediterranean power does not even begin to spell the word disaster.

Appearances are apt to be deceptive, and to show that they may be so in this instance it is necessary to describe briefly the effect which the Suez Canal has had on our programme of Imperial expansion. When that project was first mooted by de Lesseps British diplomacy did all it could to foil the undertaking, Lord Palmerston even telling him by word of mouth, and with slight inconsequence, that it was a physical impossibility, that if it were constructed it would injure British maritime supremacy, and that, in any case, it was nothing but a device for French interference in the Near-East. Seven years later Disraeli purchased the whole block of Khedivial shares, and financial ownership began to pass to Great Britain. But mere profit was not our main concern. De Lesseps had not only cut a canal, he had also altered an Imperial policy. For safety's sake it had now become necessary to protect this tenuous strip of water by every means in our power, and accordingly our efforts were at once directed towards the acquisition of, or the suzerainty over, all adjoining territory the position of which might be interpreted has a threat, direct or indirect, against either of its banks.

We consolidated our hold on Egypt, taking in the hinterland of the Sudan, and when the Anglo-French Agreement, thanks to the combined efforts of King Edward VII. and Lord Lansdowne, was signed in 1904 we heaved vast sighs of relief at the free hand which was thereby given us. Aden, now at last a colony, together with Perim, became the guardian of the Bab el Mandeb, and British Somaliland on the opposite shore of the gulf was declared a Protectorate in 1884. The whole belt of land with

its seaboard on the eastern Mediterranean and lying between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf became our vital concern, and if the Kaiser, hoping to make his *Drang nach Osten* dream come true, had been given the Bagdad railway concession, we were prepared for war.

During the Great War that effort was repeated, and when by supreme exertion we thrust back Turkey in Mesopotamia as well as in Syria and Palestine we were still mindful of the need of territorial bastions in those parts for the outlying protection of the short-cut route. The result is as we know it now. Iraq, at first a mandate but now independent, is under treaty obligation to permit an Air Force garrison. Palestine and Transjordania, still mandates, are in our occupation. The Hadramaut between Yemen and Oman, is covered by the Protectorate of Aden. The Bahrein Islands, key position to the Persian Gulf are in our possession, the Sultanate of Koweit is under our protection, while that of Oman and the two peninsulas of Qatar and Mussandam have a special relationship with the British Government. We have in short, stone by stone, erected a Near-Eastern pyramid of power in order that our sea and air routes traversing those regions shall not be liable to interference in case of war.

Such in brief are the consequences which the accomplishment of de Lesseps project brought in train, and it is in the maintenance of this pyramid of power that the real significance to us of the Mediterranean lies. For if it fell apart owing to successful enemy action in that sea, so that our garrisons were cut off from reinforcement and the territory overrun, it would be a blow to our prestige and a material loss which might disintegrate the Empire. It would mean, in fact, the neat removal from the girdling world chain of our imperial responsibilities of a middle piece consisting of the Mediterranean, 2,000 miles in length, and of all that part of the land-bridge between the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the head waters of the Persian Gulf which forms a vital communicating link 'twixt East and West. In analogy the effect would be that of the sudden elimination of Clapham Junction as a uniquely important traffic link on the Southern Railway system.

So much for the Mediterranean considered as a British right

of way in peace, and as an area for sea manœuvre in time of war. For France as well it is of extreme importance and, as her fortunes are at present indissolubly linked with ours, she also must be considered in the same connection. France derives more than 50 per cent. of her oil imports from the Eastern Mediterranean, and yet it is at the Western end that she must have sea command in war or be shorn of a large proportion of her military man-power for use on European fronts. Her war plans are calculated on the basis of free, uninterrupted passage for her troop transports between the North African ports and those of disembarcation on her southern coast. It is reasonable to assume that the cutting off of her Mediterranean oil supplies would have no immediate effect, and that, indeed, the loss from that source could be made up from increased activity in oil-fields elsewhere. On the other hand, if she were deprived of the services of her colonial army the result, unless the war were decided in the air off-hand, would be a fatal handicap. For our own purposes we require the Mediterranean for longitudinal use throughout its length, whereas the necessity for France is to use it transversely at its western end for comparatively short sea journeys about four hundred miles long.

It is the boast of every good Italian that the Mediterranean Sea shall again, after the lapse of centuries, become a Roman Lake, and there is no disputing the fact that Italy's central situation, coupled with her resurgence as a military Power in the broad, embracing sense, saves that boast from being only bombast. As it is she can be said to bridge it in the middle, largely by reason of her local air power, and the fortifying of Pantellaria is a substantial indication of a key position midway. Considered as a narrow water-way, or as, indeed, a super-grand canal, despite its total area, it is no exaggeration to state that Italy is in a fair way to control the middle lock. And that, in fact, is the state of affairs, for such is the configuration of the coast-line, and such the position of the island furniture within those confines, that the course of ships between Gibraltar and Port Said is constricted and lies, as it were, between opposing banks.

The control of a middle lock on any international waterway is useful, but power over the gate of entrance itself is better and that is how affairs are shaping now.

The wine of victory is strong and heady, especially so for a country, such as Italy, which happens to be staging, under the aegis of dictatorship, a military "come-back." Certainly she drank deeply of the stuff in Abyssinia, conquering there by a marvel of organization, reinforced by air power, an Empire the terrain of which might have baffled her for decades otherwise. Our own South African experience can point the moral of that story. And so the potion which General Franco had been brewing in the early months of 1936, once the taste had been acquired, proved fatally tempting. The possibility, however remote or miscalculated, of a Sovietized Spain in territorial possession of the Western Mediterranean, with Czecho-Slovakia, a communistic stepping-stone, at an equal distance between the proselyte and the instructor, may have been alarming. But it is much more likely, in view of the sentiment *ad majorem Italiæ gloriam*, so often and so vocally pronounced, that the game of interference was thought to be well worth while. The prospect of converting the Mediterranean into an Italian Lake might be hastened and enhanced thereby. The thither, German, end of the axis of rotation could, naturally, not escape the impulse, though, seated on the periphery, the assistance which it brought was largely specialized.

In this connection the part which Portugal may be destined to play will bear examination. Our oldest ally is also a totalitarian State and, as such, tooth-and-nail in opposition to the Government of Spain. The revolt, indeed, was hatched in Lisbon, and in every way possible Portugal has since placed herself in surreptitious fashion at insurgent disposal. The implications of victory for General Franco are, therefore, obvious, for how then could this little country, so precariously situated, and yet of such enormous strategic value, escape a Fascist domination in her turn? If the small mainland territory of Portugal were thus engulfed it would be significant enough for us. But with the homeland would go her islands, and here exists a possibility which is fraught with dread. For the Azores, Madeira, and the Cape Verde Isles are curiously put down in ocean space, and if adapted for a warlike purpose by sea and air are so situated as to endanger, not alone all shipping which might be home or outward bound *via* the Cape, but every

other ocean route as well with the exception only of sailings east and west across the North Atlantic. This would be more of German than Italian concern, for the latter country cannot stretch her power to infinity, and must rest content for long to come with a Mediterranean stranglehold. But Germany has energy to spare, and it would be idle to suggest that her clear-thinking strategists have not perceived such a golden opportunity for the encirclement of Britain.

The story is so plain to read, and the deduction so obvious to draw, that the ideological veil which the majority of Britains drew down over their eyes can only be bettered as a method of escape by the tactics of the ostrich. The Government, owing to a woeful lack of preparation, pathetically apparent during the so-called Abyssinian crisis, were of course tied hand and foot and could only proceed to re-arm at break-neck pace. But how the full implication of Italian and German intervention in the affairs of Spain could escape the minds of ordinary right-minded citizens is a sheer amazement, the aim and object being, almost without pretence of purer purpose, the aggrandisement of Italy in the Western Mediterranean, with a special eye to the entrance gate itself.

If the "Nationalist" cause triumphs Italy will be in the enviable position of a first mortgagee of Spain, with a controlling voice in her home and foreign affairs. The treasure which has been outlaid demands the best security, and the interests of the principal creditor will assuredly come first. Spain, and the Western Mediterranean, for long enough if not for always will be under Fascist domination. With a puppet State, situated strategically thus, as Manchukuo is the puppet of Japan, it can easily become directly the tool of an aggressive policy. The Balearic Isles, for instance, either by lease or cession, or according to the secret clauses of a treaty, would become utilizable as submarine and aircraft bases for Italy, and are so situated athwart the sailing path between Algiers and the French southern coast that a serious threat to the safety of the communication line is at once supplied. Similarly, either side of the Straits of Gibraltar would become a "Fascist" foothold with all that such an untoward event would imply, and here indeed to us would be the very head and front of the

offending. For if the passage of our ships-of-war could be successfully disputed in the circumstance of modern war, and the Mediterranean become Italy's *mare clausum*, with only France against her in those waters, then a knell for the passing of the British Empire would begin to toll.

It is not for the laymân to speculate on the feasibility, or otherwise, of such a naval undertaking in the face of modern opposition. He may, however, be permitted to remember how lamentable a failure was the forcing of the Dardanelles. There is great dissimilarity, no doubt, between that problem and the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar, the Dardanelles being long and narrow, while the latter have a width of eleven nautical miles and a length of only twenty miles from Cape Tarifa to Europa Point. And yet, in Parliament and elsewhere competent persons have expressed themselves as gravely doubtful on the subject, pointing out that the Rock is not easily defensible on its landward side, that shore batteries could command the stretch of water, and that there would nowadays be locally based aircraft, submarines and motor torpedo-craft to contend with, in addition to the mines and coast defences which held us up on that former occasion. We are told that the prevalence of sea fog can always be relied on to assist the passage, though it is disconcerting, if that be true, that the safety of the Empire should be dependent on a transient condition of climate! There is little doubt, however, that hostile guns on the further side of Algeciras Bay would forbid Gibraltar harbour to our fleet, and that the garrison, in consequence, would be cut off from reinforcement.

There is, however, the Mediterranean Fleet within the Sea to think of in this connection, quite strong enough, if sea-power were alone to count, to mop up the Italian Navy without the help of France. Its disadvantage would be that it cannot keep the seas forever, and that the key positions, Gibraltar and Malta, where normally the ships would harbour for their servicing and supply, would now be in the one case untenable, and in the other excessively unhealthy. There are harbours at the eastern end, well-placed and large enough to shelter all the ships, but roadsteads are very different from Imperial outposts, long in use, where the needs of a fleet have been meticulously catered for as

modern navies grew. Then there is the effect of local air power to consider. The Mediterranean is not an empty waste of water like an ocean, and only at its farthest eastern end is it beyond effective range of Italian aircraft, more particularly should General Franco win the Spanish Civil War. It is mere pretence to claim that the ship-of-war has nothing to fear from the bomber any longer, and it is hard in the extreme to envisage a fleet's complement of aircraft making headway against the metropolitan air force of Italy so near at hand to its sources of all supply, and so extraordinarily well-situated to command the narrower stretches of the Sea. Italy would be the power on the spot, with all her resources by sea and land and air at her immediate command. Her position astride the Mediterranean is one of natural strategic strength. She could sustain herself in spite of any reverse she might encounter in a sea fight, for a thousand bombing aircraft, a swarm of submarines, and numbers of motor torpedo-craft, would reinforce her sea power locally and more than offset the depletion of her strength in capital ships.

On land as well she would be formidable, for our Mediterranean and Near-Eastern garrisons are not large, while the Egyptian army has a peace strength of only 13,000 men. The Libyan corps would undoubtedly march east in an attempt to overcome Egypt and secure the Suez Canal, and the British troops in Palestine, together with the Royal Air Force units at their disposal, could hardly abandon the country to the Arab malcontents, already primed by Italian propaganda, by moving towards the scene of greater conflict. Reinforcements, even if available, must first succeed in passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, after which they would have to run the Mediterranean gauntlet in constant deadly danger of various forms of attack from an enemy with the huge resources, carefully built up to plan, of Italy. Among these the consequences of the fall of Abyssinia must receive due mention, for the Red Sea now is but an extension of the Mediterranean "Canal," with the Suez-Port Said lock a matter of 1,300 miles from the Strait of Bab el Mandeb at its final exit. Very large Italian forces are in occupation of Abyssinia, with immense stores of material and particular strength in aircraft. This imperial garrison is organized as far as possible on a self-supporting basis, for even

military megalomania would not stake its safety on so tenuous a thread as the ability to use the Suez Canal in time of war. As a result Italy possesses formidable power at the entrance to the Red Sea and greatly preponderant to our own in that vicinity. In Yemen, opposite, her political influence is also continually increasing. It might be, indeed, that a future Anzac Corps would find on the inhospitable Abyssinian shore a new "Gallipoli." Then might our power in the Eastern Mediterranean, and beyond, begin to crumble, and then might the territorial bastion which we have erected in those regions to guard the short sea way be undermined and levelled to the ground.

All this, or something very like it, would be a sequel to a victory for General Franco and then all would depend on the ability, or otherwise, of the British Navy to keep open the Straits. If the difficulty of that purely naval undertaking were insuperable, then the Mediterranean would become a closed arena of war, wherein a power which is openly desirous of altering the balance in those waters, and which, in many subtle ways, has evinced a hostile intention, could dispose of forces much large in the aggregate than any we could put against her. It is not a consoling thought.

The following quotation from *Disarmament* by Señor de Madariaga, written in 1927, should, I think, be engraved upon the minds of those who have to determine British policy :—

> "England, as a whole, still believes in the supremacy of the British Navy, as the panacea for all her international ills. That it has been a panacea for about three centuries no one can deny. That it played its last scene in this magnificent rôle during the Great War no one can deny. But that it was the last scene is apparent to everyone outside England and to those clear-sighted Englishmen who do not allow the glow of the past to interfere with the light of the present."

Then, perhaps, the case for getting down to brass tacks with Italy—*pace* the cynical comment it must arouse—will be better appreciated.

"MIGHTY NOBLE EATING"

By Helen Simpson

THE Restoration gave back to England more than a King; it restored, among other things, a normal attitude to food. The Puritans could not forget that the Church of Rome called holy-days feasts and celebrated them accordingly. To destroy all trace of the Scarlet Woman's long reign, they permitted themselves a good deal of sermonizing and even some fantastic legislation; witness that ordinance of 1644 which directed that Christmas Day should be kept as a strict fast; an opening which the satirists, named and anonymous, could not resist. Thus you have Samuel Butler's account of Protestant stalwarts blaspheming custard through the nose, and another writer grumbling:

> "All plumbs the prophets sons despise,
> Treason's in December pies . . . . .
> When Christmas was an high day
> 'Tis turned into Good Friday."

I cannot call to mind any cookery books proper published under the Commonwealth. The nearest thing is an edition of Dr. Moffet's *Health Improvement*, which deals rather with the medical aspects of eating, and dwells longest on the foods to be avoided at all costs.

But if food was deplored it was eaten; and if recipes were not published they were noted kown. Housewives were inquisitive about the new foods which every year were coming into England in the course of trade. Vegetables were becoming popular, sugar and spices cheaper. (Pepys was amazed to find himself on an Indian ship walking in cloves and nutmegs above the knees, and treading upon pepper; as noble a sight as ever he saw in his life). The housewives quietly made their experiments, and set down the results in strongly-bound books, carefully indexed, variously written, of which a good many have survived to this day. With their help, and a reasonable

background of history, it may be entertaining to consider the meals eaten and recorded by Samuel Pepys.

They are not always what they seem; the meanings of certain terms in cookery have changed, and the hierarchy of food, the order in which meat, fish, sweets are served, is by no means the same as that which we recognize. Look at a few of his dinners in detail; first, that which is noted down on January 26th, 1660, as "a very fine dinner, viz., a dish of marrow bones; a leg of mutton; a loin of veal; a dish of fowls, three pullets and a dozen of larks all in one dish; a great tart, a neat's tongue, a dish of anchovies; a dish of prawns and cheese." Meat, in the seventeenth century, always takes pride of place, while fish huddles in with the fruit and cheese as a second course; so it is probable that the bones, mutton, veal, and birds all came on the table together to start with, and were followed by oddments, with a tongue to cut at, if anybody felt that choice of three or four sorts of meat was not enough. A final dish of savoury fish is an old custom, witness the paper found in Falstaff's pocket; "Item, anchovies and sack after supper, 2s. 6d." In his and Pepys' day, as now, their purpose was to stimulate thirst; but while we nibble salt stuff before the meal, they reckoned that the main drinking should come after, and arranged matters accordingly.

Considering the resources of a seventeenth-century kitchen, I should say that this mutton and veal were roasted—that is, turned and basted before an open fire—while the birds on their dish were put into the oven to undergo the process which we call roasting, but which in fact is baking. The marrow bones, their ends sealed with paste, could be cooked in a skillet hung over the open fire. The neat's tongue might be cold; though it figures hot as a rule, and cooks took a good deal of trouble over it.

As for the great tart, there is no clue to its contents, and without that clue we wander in mazes of conjecture. The cooks of this century put their best imaginings into tart form, cutting pastry in patterns, laying great stress on the conjunction of colours, describing the dish as red or black, green or yellow according to its contents, which were not always or necessarily fruit. Bacon tart, for example, is common; so is spinach, so

is green pea. But Mrs. Pepys would not have been able to offer these latter at a January dinner, and a bacon tart would have provided no light relief. Possibly her French blood dictated that tremendous sweet known as the Great French Tart, which several housewives rather wistfully mention, it being troublesome and not cheap to make; a pound of blanched almonds beaten up in a mortar with rose-water, the breast of a cold roast turkey similarly pounded with lard, the marrow of four bones, a pound of butter, two of sugar, lemons, citron peel, a whole quarter pound of pistachio nuts and the yolks of eight eggs, all set in pastry.

This dinner of January 26th, 1660, is by no means a subtle one. But, as the years wear on, Pepys, with a little more money to spend, and a growing acquaintance among seafarers, makes experiments in taste; that musk melon in August, for instance, and the jar of olives presented by Captain Cuttance. The melon, I think, was not served with sugar. It was mostly regarded as a vegetable, and sent round with meat. Evelyn, who understood flavours, says that sugar with melon is a mistake, and a little salt and pepper is all it needs. He uses it as we should use an avocado pear. As for the olives, the seventeenth century like the twentieth shared Gerard's opinion, that "there is no nourishment at all to be looked for in them, much less good nourishment"—their oil apart, that is. They did well enough as appetizers.

The reference on September 25th to "tee, a China drink," excites many people unduly. They see in it a delicious foreshadowing of modern times—and picture Pepys, cheered but not inebriated, sipping for pleasure. I am afraid he may rather have had some notion that it was good for the tendency to stone from which he suffered. European doctors were loudly preaching its virtues at this moment. The Dutchman Boutekoe (Pepys had been, though for a short time, in Holland) received a considerable pension for his treatise on tea as a solvent of the stone. It would not be the first aliment to start as a duty and end as a treat. Also, though this is hard for a generation to realize that has been brought up on it from the mother's knee, tea is an acquired taste. The chances are that Pepys tossed down his delicately bitter brew with a slight shudder and the

feeling of duty done, just as a few weeks later, he took a draught of chocolate "to settle my stomach." Madame de Sévigné did the same, finding it odd that the doctors should order it for so many purposes, and coming to the conclusion that chocolate must be a food-of-all-work; "*C'est qu'il agit selon l'intention.*"

I am inclined to dwell upon the entry for December 2nd; "My wife and I all alone to a leg of mutton, the sauce of which being made sweet, I was angry at it and ate none." This corresponds to an aversion of my own, some inner voice singing out that :—

The stars in their courses
Hate sugar in sauces
Intended for meat—
Sweets to the sweet.

But Mrs. Pepys was, according to the practice of the time and of other housewives, well within her rights. I give one recipe, out of a dozen available, to show how that leg of mutton might have been done.

"Boile it in water and salt till it is halfe enough then take it up and put it in a greate pewter dish and as much liquor as it was boiled in as will cover it, put to it a little large mace and slices of nutmegge and then take young fennill or parsleye roots, wash and picke them, cut them in pieces and put to the mutton with a quarter of a pound of currans or raisons of the sun, cover it close and let it stew till it is almost ready to take up, then put in two spoonefulls of cappers, sweet butter, two spoonefulls of sugar mingle this well together and when the meate is enough, lay the meate on a dish with sippets, poare on the sawce and let the currans lye on the topp of the meate, let your meate be fatt, it will eate the better."

A variant of this recipe suggests stewing the mutton with prunes, barberries, orange peel and cloves. All things considered, though I see Mrs. Pepys' point of view, my sympathies are with her husband, whose tastes ran ahead of his time.

It is pleasant to see mince pies, that treasonable and Popish dish, back in favour by January 1662, when Sir W. Pen served eighteen of them as omens of good-will and good luck, one for each year he had been married. Our name for that which the crust encloses perpetuates the true tradition of its ingredients, which in practice we no longer observe. "Mincemeat" we call the mixture of fruits and spices; but (except for a little suet) we leave meat out. Not so the seventeenth century housewife. I give a recipe from a manuscript, beautifully written in a hand so like Dorothy Osborne's that sometimes in

dreams I permit myself, against evidence, to think that the book might have been hers.

> "Take four pound of Beef, and the like quantity of Suet, with four ounces of Salt, Nutmeg, Pepper, Cloves, and Mace of each one ounce, Currans and Raisins of the Sun of each two pound; your meate and Suet being choped very small mingle all together and fill your Pyes."

Nettle porridge, pease porridge, Suffolk cheese, oysters, venison, cheesecakes, and a brave collar of brawne from Winchcombe; these are all pure English dishes. Among them, like foreign *attachés* at a Lord Mayor's dinner, interesting but suspect, go the importations from abroad; a Spanish oleo; grapes and melons from Lisbon; gherkins, the gift of another sea-captain, brought from the Levant; botargo, made of the roe of mullet or tunny, and something out of the way since in Queen Anne's day poets were still exclaiming about it; ortolans, caviare, and beef â la mode. On the fourth anniversary of Pepys' operation there is a full account of his junketings, in which the combination of courses is fully set out. First came a brace of stewed carps, six roasted chickens and a jowl of salmon hot; then a tansy, two neats' tongues and cheese; the whole dressed by a hired man cook, with the help of the maid Jane.

Now this really is, as the diarist says himself, a pretty dinner. The chickens, cheese, and neats' tongues call for no special comment. The carps were expensive, and the method of their preparation dramatic; nearly all the recipes begin: "Take a living carp and knock him on the head." He was then stuffed with onions and sweet herbs, stewed in his own blood mixed with wine, and served with lemon slices. The jowl of salmon, a dish which has undeservedly gone out of fashion, was cooked in much the same way, stewed with wine and butter in a chafing dish, and garnished with slices of orange. (It is faintly horrid to recollect that mince pies, made as before but with salmon or carp in place of the beef, were liable to be served on Fridays at this period). The recipes for tansy, a dish which might almost be called the characteristic Restoration sweet, I take from a book once kept by Catherine Cotton, Charles Cotton's daughter. (It is by no means the last word in tansies, which could be made with parsley, feverfew, violets, or the spawn of a pike as well as with their eponymous herb; but

it is simple and excellent, and works out like a thick, rather limp pancake). A household book of George II.'s day, explaining how to make "an omlet or French dish," says: "beat or mingle all together as you doe a Tansy-Cake." The spinach water's sole function is to colour the substance green.

"Take a pint of cream and as much Spinach as will yeald a pint of juice stamp and strain it and then take twelve eggs and six whites, half a nutmeg and a white lofe grated and as much sugar as will sweeten it put in two or three spoonfulls of sack mingle all together and make it as hard as you would have it in a skillet, you put it into a frying pan and fry it with a little butter and dish it up with limon and strow sugar on it."

Cream and sugar; these are, of course, the foundations of many sweet dishes, and the adornment of most fruits. But nobody who reads Pepys or the cookery books of his time can fail to note and be astonished at the quantity of cream consumed, the relish for cream as a dish by itself, without other trimming than a dash of rose water or sack. People, with naïve greed, went on country expeditions to procure cream; they mixed it with their drink; they stewed capons and hares in it; they blended it with every fruit under the English sun. It was a spring and summer luxury. You do not find it, or any of its derivatives, given in the winter bills of fare, and no doubt some of the gusto with which it was enjoyed attached to the season which brought it within reach. Some of the dishes in which fresh milk and cream were chief ingredients are nowadays by force of circumstance forbidden to Londoners. A syllabub was not out of the question even a century ago, when cows still grazed in St. James's Park; but nowadays there is no following such a direction as this.

"Take a pot, and fill it half full of Red-streaked Sider, with good store of sugar and a little Nutmeg, only milk the Cow into your Sider, Nutmeg Sugar, and so drink it warm."

Pepys' drinks are as varied as his food. You find him drinking beer, Northdown ale, sack, Canary and Málaga wines, tent wine, brandy and claret; trying my Lady Carteret's coffee, and some metheglin at the King's table; taking milk for heartburn, and horse-radish ale for the stone; being cheated of a sack-posset; tasting burnt wine at a tavern, whey at the whey-house, and lamb's wool at home; vowing to drink no wine, and compounding with his conscience by taking hypocras at Guildhall, it being only "a mixed drink and not any wine"—as who should

say, a cocktail is not alcohol. Some of these mixed drinks might well be revived for present-day parties; they are easy to make, in spite of the number of ingredients, and less stunning to the stomach than the nightmare blending of liquors evolved by bar-tenders. I do not suggest that metheglin is the sort of thing flat-dwellers could undertake, but anyone might brew lamb's wool, for which Herrick's recipe is still the best:

Next crowne the bowle full
With gentle Lamb's wooll,
Add sugar, nutmeg, and ginger.
With store of ale too
And thus must ye doe
To make the Wassaile a swinger.

Put into prose this means: roast half a dozen apples, mix the pulp with sugar and spices, add to it a quart of strong ale made hot, stir, and consume.

A sack posset works out as a kind of wine custard, almost too thick to drink; the Dutch liqueur called Advocaat is probably the nearest thing to it that we have. It was popular; every housewife had a recipe for it, and these recipes vary little, except in the suggestions for making the drink present a good appearance. Says one lady, after preparing her sack and sugar: "pour the cream into it, elevating your hand to make it froth, which is the grace of your posset." Another strews it with ambergris or musk. Another, more frugal (or perhaps making a winter drink) uses the beaten whites of eggs to simulate cream. The more careful ones strain the liquor through a colander; "this is held the more exquisite way."

Hippocras takes its name from this necessary process of straining, which was done through a bag of the kind still known to chemists as "Hippocrates' sleeve." It was a ceremonial drink, handed about on such occasions as weddings and christenings (to an accompaniment of wafers) and made thus:

"Take a quart of sacke, and as much white wine and put into them grossely beaten half an ounce of Nutmegs as much sinnamon as much coriander-seed, and two races of ginger sliced and halfe a pound of sugar, shacke it all well together, and soe lett it stand a daye or two cloase stoped, and shacke it 2 or 3 times a daye. when it is steeped enough couller it with milke and soe lett it run through your jellye bagge, twice or thrice, season it with musk, amber, leamons juice and rind, and oringe flower water."

It is not surprising that this should have been a drink dedicated to feast days.

Pepys' interest in his food never languishes throughout his diary. He makes more money, in all honesty too—"good God! to see what a man might do, were I a knave." But he still notes delicacies such as asparagus and cheesecakes when he finds them, still records his anniversary dinners in detail as they rise from prettiness to nobility; and in the shadow of a sideboard loaded with plate at the Navy Office gratefully eats the traditional Christmas dinner of turkey and mince pie. His is the completest record of an ordinary seventeenth-century citizen's dietary that we possess, for though the household manuscripts which survive are useful, they sometimes cater for the eye rather than the stomach, are wish-fulfilments, not statements of fact. Pepys eating cold meat on washing-day, touches the imagination more nearly than these, with their pigs soused to imitate sturgeon, and their drinking cups made of pastry royal.

I shall set to work to cook and serve one of his dinners some day; the twenty-sixth of March would be the date most appropriate. But if I do, somebody else must knock the living carp on the head, and there will be no hippocras.

INSIDE SPAIN

By Henry Buckley

THE Spanish Government's success at Teruel may introduce fresh complications internationally. Italy and Germany were willing to reduce somewhat their commitments with the Spanish Insurgents, largely, one suspects, because they felt that with the fall of the North the war was more or less over and that General Franco would merely have to deliver a smashing *coup de grâce* on the centre front in order to complete Government demoralization.

This simplified version of the Spanish situation now becomes untenable. Government Spain is revealed as having an Army capable of carrying out a difficult military operation with verve and success and of resistance to a fierce counter-attack launched on what the Insurgent radio stations described as " world war scale." Not only is the end of the war not in sight but the possibility of further vigorous attacks by the Government suggests that General Franco may not have the opportunity to prepare any really large-scale offensive which might develop into a decisive batlte. Will the nations which have aided General Franco to the present stand by with folded arms if his defeat should appear likely ? The Spanish problem which had rather drifted into the background as an international issue may give European statesmen sleepless nights in the next few months.

Military operations are so much more spectacular and interesting than political manœuvres that the shifting political scenes behind the lines in Spain have not perhaps received as much attention as they warrant. When 1937 dawned Señor Largo Caballero was still the most prominent figure in Spain and hailed as the head of the " Government of Victory." Millions of people would have bitterly resented any suggestion that he was incapable. Yet in the first week of 1938 we see him a

lonely figure in his Valencia home abandoned by all except a faithful few and excluded completely from the *entente* within the General Union of Workers which emerged from the gathering held in Valencia on January 3, after the expenditure of much Gallic eloquence by a Socialist visitor from across the Pyrenees, M. Léon Jouhaux.

The decline and fall from power of Sr. Largo Caballero is a sad and depressing story from the personal point of view; politically it is of immense importance.

It was in the early nineties that Francisco Largo Caballero, plasterer in the summer months and road-worker in winter, became a trade unionist, He learned to write when twenty-three or twenty-four. A stolid, sober hard-working Castilian with blue eyes and generally " Aryan " in appearance, doubtless a legacy of Visigoth blood, he became a trade union secretary. Along with Pablo Iglesias and another colleague he was elected to Madrid Municipal Council in 1905. It was a great event for Spanish Socialists. They had never before achieved a seat on a municipal council in Madrid, or in fact anywhere except on one occasion in Bilbao. They only achieved this by stooping to the methods used by the Monarchist parties. Elections were controlled by the use of voting papers which bore identification marks on the back so that the polling-booth officers of the Liberal and Conservative parties who alternated in power in the State and in municipalities could control votes. In the event of unwished for candidates such as Republicans or Socialists piling up votes in any dangerous numbers sufficient faked votes were inserted to even up things. The Socialists imitated the identification mark in several wards and were thus able to catch the Monarchist " interventors " unawares. They assumed that the urns were filling with votes of their own, and when the scrutiny came it was too late to manufacture returns.

I mention this to illustrate the kind of struggle Socialists such as Pablo Iglesias and Largo Caballero were up against in Monarchist Spain. Iglesias was returned to Parliament in 1911, following the Ferrer shooting; but Caballero was not elected until 1917, after he had been condemned to death and reprieved for his part in the 1917 revolutionary general strike.

Iglesias was an old and sick man, and by 1917 Caballero was

the undisputed leader of Spanish Socialism and of the trade unions. In 1921 after some months of dispute and uncertainty, and following the report of Don Fernando de los Rios who returned from Soviet Russia with a magnificent fur coat but an adverse opinion of Communism, Caballero and most of the Socialists decided to join the re-formed Second International and to have no connection with the Third International. Under Caballero the Socialists steered a cautious course during the dictatorship of General Primo. Caballero himself agreed to serve on the Council of State, which played quite an important *rôle* in social questions; but he stipulated that he should not have to make the traditional courtesy call on King Alfonso following the appointment to this post of honour. The fact that Don Alfonso never had direct or indirect contact with such interesting and influential Left politicians as Caballero, Araquistain, Pestaña, del Vayo, and Azaña did much harm to the Monarchy. It is not very clear whether Don Alfonso's advisers should be blamed—or whether the monarch himself was refractory to seeking personal knowledge of these men who reflected important sectors of opinion in the country.

As Minister of Labour under the Republic, Caballero took a moderate line. Almost immediately he had to face the strike of telephone workers provoked by the Anarcho-Syndicalists and his resolute attitude resulted in the defeat of the strikers and the dismissal from their employment of most of the men who took a prominent part. He said afterwards that at this juncture he recommended the formation of Republican militia forces to defend the régime, but that he found no support in the Cabinet.

The overthrow of the Left and the new phase of the Republic when it came under the control of Señores Lerroux and Gil Robles, was reflected in the adoption of a violent attitude by Caballero, who led the opposition to this move to the Right and who sponsored and led the revolutionary general strike of October, 1934. Before and after the elections of 1936 Caballero was refractory to collaboration with the Republicans. Indalecio Prieto had to work very hard to bring about the Popular Front and after the elections he was unable to persuade Caballero and the other Socialist leaders to join the Government. Caballero approved of the formation of the armed Socialist militia during

the spring of 1936, which battled with the armed groups of the Fascist organizations who were carrying on terrorist activities and who proved of valuable and probably decisive importance in checking the movement during the first days in Madrid. But Caballero was, and is, a single-track mind. The dominance of the Socialists seems to loom out of proportion in his viewpoint. I remember in June, 1936, being told by Señor Araquistain that he and Sr. Largo Caballero did not approve of the union just carried out of the Socialist and Communist militias who had formed the United Socialist Youth organization. The union had been sponsored by Alvarez del Vayo who had just returned from a visit to Moscow, and Araquistain said quite openly that both he and Caballero did not approve of even indirect influence emanating from Moscow. Caballero, who is now sixty-nine, will not tolerate anything that impinges on the dominant position of his party, thus we see that while in February, 1936, he strongly mistrusted the Republicans, by June he was already beginning to fear that the real danger to socialist hegemony lay from the Communist quarter.

In September, 1936, six weeks after the insurgent movement started, Caballero became head of the Government, and his personal popularity and political strength was enormous. Military reverses followed swiftly. Toledo was forgotten and the hasty departure from Madrid to Valencia, which, from a strategical point of view, should really have been carried out earlier, was overlooked in the glow of triumph following Madrid's vigorous resistance. But Málaga rankled. There were so many things to be explained away, and even the parrying of the fierce attack at Arganda and the successful counter-attack and defeat of the Italian expeditionary force at Guadalajara did not quiet resentment.

There had been much surprise at the naming of General Asensio as Under-Secretary of War and as the director of military operations, following on Toledo. Not that the untrained and unequipped Government militias could have saved Toledo against the well-disciplined and well-equipped Franco troops, but no defences had been prepared at all, and even with defeat obvious and imminent not even such elementary precautions were taken as to evacuate the hospitals. Hundreds

of wounded and doctors and nurses were left to be slaughtered by Moors and Foreign Legionaries in one of the nastier episodes of a singularly nasty war. His appointment following Toledo as Under-Secretary of War caused much lifting of eye-brows. After Málaga violent and outspoken criticism was heard on all sides. The more moderate said Asensio was stupid; the more violent condemned him outright as a traitor. Caballero defended him at stormy Cabinet meetings. A Communist Minister asked for his resignation on the grounds that he had been seen in a cabaret in Valencia at five o'clock in the morning in a state of mild intoxication. Finally Caballero got rid of him and made another singularly bad choice by putting into his place Carlos de Baraibar, a Madrid journalist of limited capacity and with numerous enemies in the Left camp who insisted that his conversion from views of a violent right-wing character was much too recent—some seven or eight years before—to inspire confidence.

I saw a good deal of Asensio about the time of Toledo, and he struck me as a brave and intelligent officer and probably quite loyal to the Government. But he was definitely an officer of the old school. He did not understand the handling of a citizen army, and I think he had little faith in his men. He planned elaborate tactics which untrained troops could not possibly carry out, where simpler defensive measures would have saved many lives and many disappointments. At any rate Caballero lost popularity to an enormous extent by his dogged defence of this officer, and people began to suspect what many of Caballero's intimate friends had long known, namely that he was a very obstinate old man who looked at every problem from an intensely personal viewpoint.

His final overthrow was not, however, directly due to Asensio. It was the result of the May *putsch* prepared by the Anarchists and Trotskyists in Barcelona. The free hand permitted to these extremists before the rising, and the refusal to take stern measures afterwards, lined up Republicans, Communists and the great majority of the Socialists against Caballero. The Communists as his most vocal opponents led the revolt, but behind the scenes the hand of the plump Señor Prieto (" Don Inda " is the name by which he is generally known) was evident.

He seems to have wished Alvarez del Vayo to take the premiership, at least there is a credible report to that effect. But Vayo seemed to hesitate. Why he should do so is not clear, for he has long been suspect to the Caballero clique as being too close to the Communists. Dr. Negrin, who had done an excellent job at the Finance Ministry, was named Premier, and the Anarchists were left out. The scholarly doctor is *persona grata* to most parties and a born diplomat. Many thought that Señor Prieto intended to govern indirectly through Dr. Negrin, but the latter has a good deal of personality and is well able to look after himself.

After lying low for some time Caballero in the rôle of fallen angel of the Spanish Revolution began to plot. Surrounded by a clique of admirers who told him day in and day out that he must save Spain from Communism which was absorbing the nation in enveloping tentacles he took a bold and singularly inadvised step. As Secretary-General of the General Union of Workers he suddenly surprised the two million odd members of this organization by discovering that more than a dozen trade unions were behind in their payment of their fees to the parent federation and must therefore be expelled. Now it happened that all the unions in question had recently signed a manifesto offering their unconditional support to the Government for the purpose of winning the war. How serious a political blunder this was may be deduced from the fact that one of the unions concerned was that of the Asturian coal miners, most of whose members were at the moment fighting in the terrible and hopeless struggle in the north and who were being glorified daily by the Press of all shades of opinion in Government Spain as heroes and martyrs. This was unadulterated political suicide, and the Government which had been worried as to the possibility of Caballero and his advisers, Araquistain, Baraibar, Rodolfo Llopis, Pascual Tomas, Wenceslao Carrillo, receiving support not only from some of the Socialist workers but also from the anarcho-syndicalists of the National Labour Confederation (C.N.T.), could breathe freely. Caballero was finished as the result of his narrowness of view. Of forty-three unions only some nine remained loyal to him, and finally these returned to the fold after the Valencia meeting under Jouhaux; Pascual

Tomas, Carlos Hernandez, Ricardo Zábalza and several other trade unionists placed in a conflict of loyalty to the General Union and loyalty to Caballero decided on the former.

Apart from Caballero's personal tragedy there is the wider implication of his experience. It is the fall from popularity of the most typical representative of the " old guard " Socialists who both in their party and in the trade unions take a consistently and strongly anti-communist line. In October of this year I interviewed Señor Araquistain regarding the views of Caballero ; he was a man in a position to know exactly those views. He said :

> " Both Señor Caballero and those Socialists who agree with him are determined to fight the Comintern just as vigorously as we fight Fascism. We are grateful to the Russian State for what it has done for us during the civil war but we definitely refuse to tolerate in any way that Spain shall come under the influence of the Third International."

I went to a very prominent Socialist and asked what he thought of this statement. His reply was :

> " We are quite as determined to defend Spanish independence as is Señor Caballero. But we do not wish to cross the bridge before we reach the river. If any any time the Communist International attempts to interfere in purely Spanish matters we shall resist vigorously. But this is not the case at the present moment. Both we and the whole of the Spanish people who support us are deeply grateful to Russia for the help we have received and which contrasts so strongly to the rebuffs and veiled hostility which we have received from our democratic neighbours. It is quite impossible and impracticable to attempt to distinguish between the Comintern and the Soviet régime."

With the fall of Caballero the way has been smoothed for the union of the Socialist and Communist Parties, which is being pushed very actively by most of the Communists and a lesser, but nevertheless active group of the Socialists. By this union the Socialists hope to obtain sufficient of the strategic positions to impose a moderating influence on the Communist rank and file. The Communists are willing to sacrifice a good deal in order to obtain entry into the party that still dominates the immensely powerful trade union federation, the General Union of Workers, which is prospering and is waxing much stronger than the rival anarchist federation.

So much has been written about the incompatibility of the Spanish character with Communism that many still feel that the Socialists would be committing suicide to unite with them.

But it is a very open question as to whether a nation long dominated by Catholic thought, with its insistence on the acceptance of a rigid dogma, is really likely to be hostile to a political creed evolved on the acceptance of hard-and-fast doctrines. When one surveys today the Communist influence in Spain, with 320,000 members in the party, with a youth organization which claims some 350,000 members, with Pioneers, Friends of the Soviet Union, League of Anti-Fascist women, International Red Help, and other organizations which bring literally hundreds of thousands of Spaniards under the influence of Communist thought, it needs a good deal of imagination to envisage an early collapse or decline. Nor can one overlook the very strong Communist influence in the Army—which seems to grow rather than decline.

The Socialists have suffered from their long training as an opposition party. After the Franco *coup* of July, 1936, when paramount responsibility fell on their shoulders they failed to realize the necessity of complete reorganization and of the building up of a machine capable of leading masses instead of their old purely opposition movement.

To-day they need the Communist organization in order to swing the masses. Their own organization is no use at all for the present task, and their only alternative would be to use the trade unions as direct political bodies. Now this is just what Socialist leaders such as Prieto and Negrin do not want to do. They wish to keep the administrative power in the hands of political bodies. For most of them the amalgamation with the Communists looms as a distasteful probability, but sooner or later either they will have to accept unity or to submit to a trial of strength, and they are much more likely to adopt the former solution.

The Popular Front has come out of 1937 very well. The adjective " popular " still appears to hold good. The radical extremists of Anarchist organizations and the members of the Trotskyist " Poum " Party, who maintain that the revolution is being betrayed and call for violent action against the Government, have lost power and influence. The Spanish masses very definitely want an orderly administration and are tired of vague social experiments. Suppression of the murder of

political opponents and prisoners appears to have become almost complete. I spent more than a fortnight in and around Teruel during the capture and defence of that town. There were a few excesses. One witness told me that he had seen three bodies of civilians who had been summarily shot. I myself saw the body of a man who I was told had been shot "because he was a Carlist." Two tough little *carabineros* told me that they had shot a priest who emerged from a church as they entered the town. But these were the only cases I came across, and considering the fact that over 20,000 soldiers and civilians were taken in the town and its surroundings this would seem to indicate that the Government can justly claim to have established a system of justice and a spirit of discipline which works—even under war conditions.

Lonely and isolated, receiving far less help from outside than is generally believed abroad, Government Spain is, nevertheless, slowly organizing both her civil and military life with a surprising degree of reality. There is better stuff in Spain than most of us suspected, and it is terribly sad that it should need the stress and cruelty of civil war to reveal this.

THE GERMAN ARMY OFFICER

By Haruspex.

IF the recent internal and external crisis of the *Reichswehr* has done something to drag that most enigmatic factor in German as well as in World politics into the public limelight its work is but half accomplished. Commentaries abroad have through their lack of precise information—both as regards the army's relationship to the party and its inner structure and conflicts—proved singularly unenlightening, indeed in their interpretation of the issues involved contradictory to a remarkable degree.

To understand the present *Reichswehr* both in its internal and external outlook one has to remember, above all, that it is essentially a product of the post-War era and that its much advertised connections with the Old Imperial Army are in reality far slighter than one would imagine in view of the sentimental emphasis laid upon them. As all the High Commanders gained their first and most impressive experiences in the old army it is inevitable that the vast majority of them should be still strongly imbued with its spirit and principles, but this does not alter the fact that, taken as a whole, the spirit and outlook both of the army and of the officers differ most markedly from their predecessors. Institutions like the General Staff—which, by the way, never under the old *régime* exercised the influence ascribed to it—have been established on the old lines and fulfil roughly the same functions, but the men that comprise them are no longer of the same type or character.

The greatest difference in outlook between the pre- and the post-war Army is undoubtedly in its attitude towards politics. The old Imperial Army was definitely unpolitical. It rather despised politics as a contemptible game, with which it had no need to concern itself. Owing its allegiance to the Crown and not to the nation, it was protected by the person of the sovereign

from all immediate contact with the political struggle and could devote itself exclusively to its military duties.

The result of the World War was to turn the army out of this privileged and secluded position. Instead of constituting the spoilt darling of society and the main pillar of the political structure it found itself suddenly cut down to an insignificant fraction and at the same time the object of the deepest suspicion both on the part of the Inter-allied Control Commission and of the Republican parties, a suspicion which it took years to live down and all the ability of such a born diplomatist as General von Seekt to overcome so far as to secure for the Army the indispensable freedom for its internal consolidation. On the other hand, with the practical disarmament of Germany through the Versailles Treaty making the *Reichswehr* incapable of effectively fulfilling its purpose, the defence of its country, the evasion of these regulations, not unnaturally, appeared in the light of a patriotic duty and led the *Reichswehr* into the series of political adventures culminating in the wholesale organizing and training of entire units within the framework of the Red Army and the secret rearmament achieved before and under the Third Reich. No wonder that the atmosphere of conspiracy created by the necessity of keeping these activities secret, not only from the enemy but from its own politicians as well, produced within the *Reichswehr*, and in particular in the Ministry of War, a most curious and abnormal mentality differing fundamentally from the traditional straightforward, if rather blunt, honesty of the Prussian officer.

Dissimulation assumed the character of a virtue, double-crossing was now a matter of routine, and a skill for political intrigue became a highly valued asset. It was inevitable that moral standards should become blurred and, that fundamental barrier once broken down, the lines between intriguing for the sake of one's country and for one's own or for one's group advancement should become easily confused.

Nor was this the only point in which the disintegrating influences of the Republican era changed the *Reichswehr* officers outlook fundamentally from that of the former army. To keep the politicians from prying too closely into the Army's secrets was not the most arduous task the successive High Command

had to contend with. Far greater was the difficulty of keeping—in that era of intense political turmoil and altercation—the Army and the officers safely out of the political strife. Not that the Army as a body was ever as out-and-out reactionary, monarchist and bellicose, as the politicians of the Left were apt to see and to decry it. On the contrary the experiences of the World War and, above all, of the final bitter collapse had not failed to leave their mark upon the vast majority of the officers and had instilled them with a far wider and above all more modern social outlook and understanding of the relationship between a leader and those to be led by him than had formerly been the case.

Above all, the social character of the officers corps itself had undergone a marked change. The feeble attempts made in the beginning at its "republicanization" had miscarried or were easily shelved. But, curiously enough, the landed gentry and old Prussian officers families failed to retain their hold upon the Army to anything like its former degree. In their stead the middle classes—more emotional in temperament and far more easily swayed by the general currents of public opinion—began more and more to dominate among the younger ranks. The older officers made it a point of honour to maintain the strictly unpartisan and unpolitical attitude demanded of them, but the young bloods, impulsive, hot-headed and violently nationalistic could not be expected to stand aside from the general political struggle, which during those years shook the youth of Germany like a fever. Inexperienced and idealistic, they were inevitably drawn towards the more extreme and intolerant brands of nationalism. Ludendorff's prestige as a commander attracted many of them, especially amongst the Staff officers, to the political absurdities of his Tannenberg League. The attempt to fuse an extreme nationalism into a no less decided socialism undertaken by a small group of intellectuals around the Socialist Niekisch, and similar trends towards a "National-Bolshevism," found a remarkable echo not only amongst officers but non-commissioned officers as well. National socialism itself originally excited less interest. Yet it was the famous trial of three officers for entering into illicit communications with that party, held at Leipzig in 1930, which for the first time revealed to the general public to what degree the political strife had penetrated

into the ranks of the *Reichswehr* and the depth of dissension which it had aroused there, not only between elder and younger officers, but between the various warring groups of the latter. It was symbolical of the whole situation that of the three officers accused, one disappeared altogether from the political stage, the second after his release received a high position in the S.A., while the third went over to the anti-Nazi National Bolshevists. Desperate efforts made by the High Command to reaffirm the unpolitical and non-partisan character of the *Reichswehr* succeeded during the following years in restoring its outward unity to a considerable extent, but the precarious cohesion thus re-established was strained to the breaking-point, when General von Schleicher found himself compelled personally to assume the position of Chancellor and thereby to drag the *Reichswehr* itself into the midst of the political conflict.

Thus the " National " Revolution of 1933 found the *Reichswehr* already in a state of scarcely concealed inner tension, which the following years were destined to increase to a remarkable degree. Thanks to the practical autonomy enjoyed by them, the fighting services did succeed in escaping the worst effects of the universal " politization " brought about in every other sphere of public life in Germany by the new *régime*. But even they could not in the long run keep themselves immune, could not escape the influences emanating from the rapid disintegration of every standard of private and public morality surrounding them. The Nazis, as everyone knows, lay great emphasis upon *Weltanschauung*. But this, instead of reintegrating these divergent influences within the Forces by the tendency to set political reliability above service and its encouragement of every form of spying and political sycophantism served only to accentuate these dissensions further and to destroy irrevocably the considerable degree of professional, if not of political, solidarity hitherto maintained within the ranks of the officers corps. Instead of continuing to form one great community, the members of which, beneath all outer divergencies, were proudly conscious of their fundamental unity, the officers corps broke up into innumerable small cliques and coteries, each viewing all others with the deepest suspicion and rivalry. Dissimulation and mutual distrust of the other fellows' private and political outlook and

reliability took the place of the former frank and open comradeship, while the advantages gained by those that put themselves wholeheartedly at the disposition of the new *régime* tended still further to foster that unhealthy spirit of competition and intrigue so utterly incompatible with the moral integrity and inner cohesion of any armed force. The result of this internal disruption brought about by the Nazis in the service has been to break down within these few years effectively the Army's fundamental strength, its power for concerted action, and thus made it innocuous from the party's point of view, but at the cost of reducing its fighting value to a degree extremely difficult to assess.

Amongst the various groups to be discerned to-day within the ranks of the officers corps the adherent of the old traditions of the Prussian Army are, above all, to be found among the higher ranks, the majority of whom naturally still cling to the professional and political tenets of their youth. In their political outlook they are conservative, although not necessarily monarchist. They have accepted the Nazi Government as the liberator from the fetters of Versailles. But intimate contact and frequent conflicts with its representatives has robbed them of any illusions they might still have entertained as to the moral qualities of its leaders or of the *régime* as a whole, which most of them continue to serve only because there is nothing else left and with constant self-abnegation. They have tried to maintain, as far as possible, the non-political character of the army even under the new *régime*, and to that end have restricted party propaganda to the utmost degree compatible with avoiding open opposition. They are, above all, most of them, definitely and profoundly Christian in their outlook, in that deep, unostentatious way characteristic of the old army and they have succeeded in maintaining the army the only public body in Germany with a positively Christian basis of thought.

Unhappily their very qualities, in the situation they were placed in, have proved their undoing when dealing with the representatives of the party. Balanced and objective in their outlook and animated by a genuine feeling of responsibility for the country, but unhappily without any political will of their own, they have been hopelessly outmatched in their conflicts

with the Nazi leaders, no less by their lack of a positive purpose than by that of the barefaced unscrupulousness and dare-devil determination which they found themselves up against. Time and again, in the early days of the new *régime*, they missed them opportunities of overthrowing it by a bold stroke; time and again they let the chance slip out of their grasp, for fear of the political radicalization of the country if the *coup* should fail—and, above all for the lack of a political conception of their own—until the strength of the party had grown, and its grip upon the army tightened to such an extent that an open revolt could only be envisaged as a desperate gamble.

For the greatest weakness of this group lies in the fact that it is almost wholly confined to the older officers, but has few, if any, adherents amongst the junior ranks, politically either indifferent or radical in their views. Thus, although it has been able hitherto to emphasize its demands by presenting the government with a united front of practically all the High Commanders, it has, on the other hand, been more and more fatally handicapped by the uncertainty, as to the support it would be able to count upon in an out-and-out struggle on the part of the mass of the middle and lower ranks—not to speak of the bulk of the rank-and-file.

This fundamental weakness of the conservative elements in the army has inevitably increased through the large-scale expansion both of the army itself and of its officers' corps, during the last years. Nor has the re-enlistment of suitable officers of the Old Imperial Army, served to offset this to any considerable degree; as has been erroneously supposed. For, apart from the fact that even the youngest of these re-enlisted officers of the former Imperial Army are to-day nearing the forties, only a small percentage of them have actually proved fit to be retained permanently in active service; the majority of them have been either placed on the reserve or later transferred to the new group of E-officers, i.e., those unfit for active service and destined to relieve the officers capable of being used in the field from all the bureaucratic routine work unavoidable in a modern army. Thus they form a group of second-rate officers with limited opportunities for promotion and consequently but restricted moral influence and, what is even more

to the point in this connection, they wield practically no executive power with the Services.

Opposing these conservative elements as individuals rather than collectively stands a second group, at least equal in numbers, and individually far stronger both owing to their own activity and the party backing they enjoy : the opportunists and adventurers. Men of the *Landsknechts* type, of strong brutal instincts, who see in the general upheaval of all traditional standards and values brought about by the Nazis nothing but the heaven-sent opportunity for the gratification of their private lust for power and their personal promotion and enhancement. Ready to make their way by any intrigue or deception conceivable, these men, to be found in all ranks of the Services up to the very highest, find the atmosphere created by the *régime* a most congenial medium for the development of their talents in that direction and feel no compunction in paying lip-service to the shibboleths of the Party. Cynical and self-seeking they are in no way troubled by their insight into the moral depravity of the party and its consequences ; on the contrary, their fundamental similarity of character—or rather lack of it—attracts them no less to the Nazi leaders than the positive benefits to be derived from such a connection. On the other hand, they would be the first to betray them if their influence showed ever signs of breaking down.

The mass of the Party's adherents, in particular amongst the younger officers, on the other hand, are honest idealists. Their ideas may be immature and fantastic ; they are frequently proud of having dispensed with all religious " mythologies " and tend to make a positive virtue out of their purely secular outlook. But their cult of heroism and idealism is at least genuine and unselfish. As far as the realities of the Nazi *régime* have disappointed the high hopes they had set upon it, they have responded by a further radicalization towards a more genuine socialism or national-bolshevism. Thus these young officers as far as they are politically interested at all, have to a large extent taken over within the party the *rôle* of the S.A. prior to June, 1934. The result is that although ready to back the party against the " reactionaries " their movement contains revolutionary tendencies which might in the end prove scarcely

less embarrassing and dangerous to the *régime* than the more sober and cautious opposition of the " old men."

The majority of the officers, however, belong to neither of these contending groups. Torn between the reverence officially paid to the Nazi *régime* in the Services and its practical effects, as they cannot help noticing them at every turn, they prefer to avoid taking a decision of their own by withdrawing upon their professional duties, seeking to find in their conscientious and efficient fulfilment a definite if limited purpose for their life and efforts. Overwhelmed by the immense increase of work brought about by the expansion of the forces, their only wish is to be allowed to concentrate all their forces upon their immediate objectives and to be spared any disturbances in the form of political or *weltanschauliche* propaganda. Completely taken up by the task of developing and consolidating the defences of their country they naturally tend to deprecate any dissensions between their leaders and the Government as not only liable to force them into taking sides against their wish, but to shake and even possibly to destroy the object of their interest and efforts. Opposed, therefore, to any " politicization " of the forces, they are, on the other hand, not sufficiently determined to make any effective stand against it.

Nowhere has the clash between the Nazis and the Services and between the various sections within the officers cut so deep as in the sphere of religion. For the fact that the leaders of the Army have hitherto succeeded in maintaining its Christian basis and traditions does not imply that the officers as a body or even the bulk of them are any longer to be accounted as Christians or even care to consider themselves as such. Instead of the deep, if rough and primitive devotion of the older generation the mass of the younger officers professes either the slick and non-committal Christianity of the Nazis or openly shows a spirit of complete cynicism. Much of this, apart from the general atmosphere of the Third Reich, is due to the disastrous influence of General Ludendorff.

Such in its broadest outlines is the deeper background of the present crisis, precipitated though not brought about by the generals' protest against Marshal von Blomberg's *mésalliance*.

Externally the end will be doubtless the complete liquidation of the semi-independent position still enjoyed by the Fighting Services. Three or even two years ago the inner cohesion and external strength of the *Reichswehr* would certainly have been sufficient for the overthrow of the *régime*; now any signs of dissatisfaction will in all probability only serve to put the Nazi leaders even more upon their guard and to spur them to tighten their hold upon the Services.

In these circumstances the practical consequences of the responsibility which the Party claims to have assumed for the politics and the morals of the army are ominous enough. Will the party insist upon abolishing the Christian character of the Forces or at least censure its chaplains, as one of its most ardent supporters amongst the High Commanders had, ineffectively, tried to do? Will it introduce political supervision from without in the form of political instructions delegated by it into the army, or will it be content with establishing within the officers' corps that elaborate system of observation and denunciation, of spying and counterspying, which in the Third Reich honeycombs every public and party organization? Will it insist upon recruiting the officers in future exclusively from its own ranks, as it has recently done in the case of civil servants?

Will it follow the example of its axis-partner in introducing its national-socialist salute into the Services instead of their traditional ceremonial. One fact alone is certain, that the Party will spare no effort to convert the initial victory won over its only serious internal rival into as complete a hold as is humanly—or inhumanly—conceivable. That the open opponents of the *régime* will be more or less bloodily weeded out on this occasion and the grip of the Party upon the machinery increase at least externally, is certain. But it is well within the realms of possibility that the very intensity of the pressure applied to eliminate and suppress any opposition or divergence from the official creed may serve to bring groups into the line of opposition that would hitherto not have thought of doing so, not only amongst the younger officers, but above all amongst the bulk of mere "soldiers."

M. VAN ZEELAND'S REPORT

By J. B. Condliffe

AS might have been expected, the Van Zeeland Report, presented on the 26th January, 1938, after an enquiry lasting nearly ten months, is a very ably written document. Though brief, it touches upon all the manifold aspects of present trade restrictions and provides a vivid picture of their interwoven complexity. It is conceived in three parts. The first deals very briefly with the preliminary question: Is it a useful thing to develop international trade? M. van Zeeland comes quickly to the conclusion that, although autarchy is theoretically attainable in certain countries, its attainment involves a lowering of the standard of life of the population, and that, although the absolute importance of the international market may have been exaggerated in certain cases, "its relative importance appears to-day to be as great as ever, and its marginal influence is real and powerful."

This belief, he is able to state categorically, is shared practically unanimously by all statesmen of the present day. Indeed one may go further and draw attention to the unanimity of opinion on this broad question of principle, which is apparent not only among the statesmen, but among business leaders as shown in the Berlin Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce, and among monetary authorities, as illustrated by the recent speeches of the chairmen of the leading British banks, as well as among the official experts who constitute the membership of the League's Economic Committee. There must, however, be real and strong reasons why this unanimous desire to increase international trade cannot be translated into action. M. van Zeeland himself "could not but note that when once the first and eminently favourable stage had been passed, the attitude almost everywhere, became qualified by a very marked reserve."

Here, surely, is a case for further enquiry. What is it that makes the practically universal desire for increased international economic co-operation unattainable in practice. There must be substantial reasons for the hesitation of statesmen to do in fact what they approve in theory. The last few years have abounded in plans and initiatives for the freeing of international trade. The Economic Committee of the League discusses little else, official and unofficial suggestions are made frequently and there have even been attempts at practical beginnings, such as the Ouchy and Oslo Conventions; but very little progress is made. It is not sufficient to retort that economic co-operation must be preceded by political settlement. The counter-retort that the way to peace lies through economic appeasement is too obvious. There are in fact considerable economic difficulties to be faced before there can be much real hope of reconstructing an international monetary standard and a freer international trading system. The fact must be recognized that most of the practical suggestions so far made deal only with symptoms and shirk the underlying difficulties. International trade is a potent means of levelling out price discrepancies; but these discrepancies are now very great between national markets. It is an equally potent means of assuring territorial specialization; but national industry and agriculture has been fostered along lines that would be disrupted if trade were freer. The extraordinarily effective new methods of protection have been imposed precisely because tariffs were unable to protect domestic interests against external competition from areas of more efficient production. The importance now attached to *employment* as distinct from production or prices must be reckoned with, and a rearrangement of external debt burdens must be faced.

The second part of M. van Zeeland's report is an interesting and lucid exposition of the principal direct obstacles in the way of international trade and of the means for reducing them. Necessarily his exposition follows lines already very familiar to students of international economic problems. Without entering into the more fundamental issues referred to above, he concentrates on tariffs, indirect protection and quotas as the most important economic barriers to trade and upon exchange

instability, hindrances to capital movements and restrictions on payments as the most important financial difficulties.

Though the diagnosis of these difficult questions is attempted in ten pages it is very lucid and gives a vivid picture of the complex restrictions with which trade is now surrounded. M. van Zeeland recognizes very clearly the practical difficulties of any attack upon these inter-related problems. Indeed there is almost an over-emphasis of these difficulties and too much concession to national and administrative points of view. Apart from this over-caution there is little to quarrel with in the diagnosis. M. van Zeeland puts his finger unerringly on the main obstacles to international trade. These obstacles are now common knowledge, but the processes of popular education are slow, and the periodic restatement of what has now come to be expert agreement is very necessary.

Dealing first with tariffs, M. van Zeeland re-states the case, not against moderate duties which have been in existence long enough for their effects to have been absorbed into the production and price systems of the countries concerned; but against excessive and arbitrary tariff protectionism. He might well have added a sentence or two to his condemnation of excessive duties, drawing attention to the disturbing effects of frequent tariff revision as he does to the administrative complications that arise from " exaggerating the detail of tariffs and elaborating specification to such a point that the regulations so drawn up are in fact aimed against some individual producer, while deceptively retaining the appearance of general regulations." These are far from being the only abuses of administrative procedure, and the report quite rightly draws attention to the need for stopping the abuse of sanitary regulations and the complication of other administrative formalities.

Most interest attaches, however, to the practical proposals of the Report. These are modest and hedged about with reservations. M. van Zeeland proposes in the first place a series of parallel declarations by Governments undertaking " not to raise or widen the range of their tariffs and to carry out a gradual reduction of such duties as are of an exceptional character and the amount of which is notably greater than the average incidence of the tariff." Even this modest action is to be

spread over a certain number of years. More hope, however, appears to be placed upon the negotiation of bilateral commercial agreements, accompanied by a modification of the most-favoured-nation clause in certain cases. Certain practical suggestions are made for the mitigation of indirect means of protection. It is recommended that industrial quotas should be suppressed. This is perhaps the boldest recommendation of the Report; but it is tempered by the suggestion that such suppression could take place over a series of years and that "tariff quotas" by which imports above a certain minimum are penalized by heavy duties might be utilized in the meantime. Further exceptions are made in favour of quotas against dumping especially from countries with low living standards, and for certain quotas necessary to implement the working of "such international cartels as conform to the general interest." These exceptions open a fairly wide door, and when the much vaguer and less direct proposals that are made for agricultural quotas are taken into consideration it is evident that not a great deal of action is thought practical in this field.

Both in the strictly economic field and in the financial suggestions discussed below, the somewhat extreme caution shown by the authors of the Report raises a very nice question. They have evidently been anxious to put forward plans that offer some prospect of being taken up and translated into effective action. This is shown by the care taken to state practical difficulties and to allow for exceptions and for time before their mild suggestions can be fully carried out. This raises the tactical question as to how far one should go with such concessions to political and administrative expediency. Is it wise, after all, to deceive ourselves as to the difficulties that must be faced? Would it not be wiser to state bluntly what ought to be done and allow the interests concerned to whittle away the proposals? Is there really much more hope of practical action from proposals that are so hedged about with exceptions or will these exceptions provide an excuse, if excuse is needed, for further delay and possibly for inaction?

In the monetary sphere attention is rightly concentrated upon the problems of exchange control—the difficulties now placed in the way of securing payment for exports and the means of

payment for imports. These difficulties are more immediate and of greater practical importance, at least in the short run, than the restrictions placed in the way of foreign investments and, from a trading point of view, outweigh the problems raised by exchange uncertainties and the resulting spasmodic movements of short-term capital ("hot money"). Ultimately, of course, there is no alternative, if international economic co-operation is really desired, to the re-establishment of an international monetary standard—which probably means in practice a reorganized and improved gold standard with fixed exchange rates. Upon this firm basis it would be possible again to count upon a modest but expanding volume of international investment and a growing international trade. The leading currency systems now have the means with which to meet sudden movements of "hot money." Their gold reserves are very great, and substantial proportions of these reserves have been kept aside as Equalization Funds expressly designed to meet sudden capital movements and in doing so to avoid sharp exchange fluctuations.

The smooth working of an international monetary standard, however, pre-supposes economic conditions that do not exist at the present time, notably an assurance of reasonable international economic equilibrium. It would be a grave error, indeed a disaster, if the gold standard were to be restored by unilateral action (as in the immediate post-war period) or even by multilateral agreement (as was attempted at the time of the Monetary and Economic Conference in 1933) and should again break down because of the strains to which it was subjected.

It is probable, therefore, that informed opinion will agree with M. van Zeeland that "the final and definitive solution of the (international monetary) problem must be placed not at the beginning but at the end of the effort of international co-operation towards which we are aiming." Meantime, however, an interim step is suggested by the Report—a revision and extension of the tripartite agreement of September, 1936. What is now required is an assurance that exchange stability will be maintained over as wide an area as possible. This, as M. van Zeeland points out, is easier now that the depreciation to which the main trading currencies have been subjected gives

the possibility of internal and external price equilibrium. But his warning of the necessity for a real will to maintain monetary equilibrium, by appropriate internal and external policies, should be underlined.

The point of immediate attack upon monetary trade restrictions, is quite clearly exchange control. If other countries could follow the example of Austria and first mitigate and then abandon the practice of exchange control, then clearing systems, blocked accounts and other impedimenta to trade might be dealt with. M. van Zeeland emphatically suggests the necessity of abandoning exchange control, at any rate as regards commercial transactions. Certain measures of control might be retained over capital movements; but "the first and most urgent step is to bring about the suppression of all restrictions on payments for merchandise."

In order to bring about such a reform, however, whether immediately, or in stages, two major problems must be tackled, a settlement of past arrears of debt, particularly commercial short-term obligations, and measures to ease the difficulties of the transition period. Practical suggestions are made whereby the Bank for International Settlements might help in the latter respect.

Such suggestions as these, however, are not new. There is, in fact, no insuperable technical difficulty in restoring a much greater freedom of commercial payments. The real question is the will of the monetary, and above all the political authorities, in the countries most concerned to agree to the necessary measures of international co-operation. The crux of the problem, therefore, lies in the questions M. van Zeeland deals with in the third part of his report.

As the reception of the report shows, the difficulties of initiating any positive action are very great. Governments will express appreciation of its suggestions and will undertake to take further "soundings;" but it is not easy to get them to do anything. There is a notable deterioration in recent years of anything approaching international responsibility. The first semi-official statement made, prior indeed to the publication of the report, came from Italy and was at least sceptical, if not hostile, in regard to proposals for international collaboration.

It is indeed difficult to envisage dictatorial Governments relinquishing the powerful disciplinary weapon which exchange control puts in their hands. The statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, also, while more appreciative of the Report, was accompanied by a defence of tariffs (British model) on the ground that they are invaluable counters which may be used to protect British interests in commercial bargaining with other countries. Quotas are defended, for instance in Switzerland, on exactly the same grounds. Government policies, in other words, are largely influenced by regard not for general prosperity but for particular interests. This is precisely what Adam Smith described as " that baleful spirit of commerce that would govern a great empire by the maxims of the counter." Neo-mercantilism is in the ascendant, however, and its spirit is fostered by the political insecurity of the present time. What can be done in this situation ?

M. van Zeeland's suggestion is that five great trading powers France, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Germany and Italy, should be approached to ascertain if they would be willing to attempt closer international collaboration along the lines of his report and if so how far they would go. If the preliminary answer was encouraging, he suggests the creation of a " bureau appointed for the purpose," to work out a scheme of action. Here is the most novel suggestion of his whole report. It is clear that it is a further retreat from the League in an effort to bring in Italy and Germany. The bureau would be, it is presumed, a body like the secretariat of the Non-Intervention Committee, created for a particular purpose. The ordinary man, rather weary by now of the constant efforts to cajole the dictatorships into co-operation, may well wonder if it is really worth while to invent new mechanisms and make fresh overtures. It is, of course, highly desirable on political as well as economic grounds to restore the fullest degree of international understanding and co-operation that can be obtained ; but must we wait until a formula can be found and a bait devised to bring in the peoples whose need on any ordinary test is greatest, but whose policies are the most obstructive ? Is there any hope that concessions will bring a hearty response, or will they merely be used as an argument for further concessions ?

There are some countries whose conception of co-operation seems identical with that of the man who wanted his friend to coo, while he himself operated.

We can only hope that the somewhat disillusioned cynicism of the man in the street will be disappointed and that something will come out of the "further soundings," even though the method proposed is a somewhat gratuitous cold-shouldering of the established machinery at Geneva, which still receives the nominal adherence of three and the unofficial co-operation of a fourth of the six Powers mentioned.

Meantime there appears to be more hope of something being done to liberate international trade if the countries that really wish to do so will negotiate agreements among themselves and leave the reluctant ones to come in when they feel disposed to do so. Perhaps the most practically significant sentence of the whole of this report is that in which M. van Zeeland says that "no one would under-estimate the effect which would be produced—either directly, in its reaction on the two economies concerned, or indirectly in its repercussion on the whole world—by the conclusion, in a spirit of international collaboration, of a commercial agreement covering a wide range, between the two great Anglo-Saxon communities." Here is something we can do and do quickly. If it is done in the spirit of Burke's plea that "great empires and little minds go ill together" it will forge enduring links of friendship and redound to the mutual advantage of the whole English-speaking world. In the world of tomorrow, the United States must play a *rôle* of increasing importance. Already it is responsible for 45 per cent. of the world's manufacturing production. The series of commercial treaties already negotiated have led it far along the road towards accepting, as a creditor nation should, an excess of imports over exports. In years to come the steady vision of its Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, may well be regarded as responsible for a reversion of commercial policy marking a turning-point not only in its own history but in the history of the world. It is surely the path of wisdom to link the British Commonwealth with the growing political influence and increasing economic importance of the United States, and at the same time to support the far-sighted initiative of its present Foreign Minister.

PUBLICITY BY STEALTH

By Montgomery Belgion

THE task of making known overseas British culture, the attractions which Great Britain offers to tourists, and British policy in relation to native races and to international affairs in general, is to be under official ægis. The Prime Minister has announced that the Government is appointing a committee to co-ordinate the various forms of British publicity abroad. The most recent of these forms is that of broadcasting. Hitherto Britannia has not ruled the air waves. Indeed, foreign propaganda has had the ether to itself. But a first step has now been taken to counteract this foreign wireless activity. The British Broadcasting Corporation has started a service of broadcasts in Arabic, and services in Spanish and Portuguese are to follow. In connexion with these broadcasts in foreign languages two things, I believe, still remain to be pointed out.

It is idle to deny that an immense quantity of official and semi-official propaganda is now being carried on abroad. Its general effect is to make it impossible for the world at large to ascertain the truth about important happenings. The present struggle in Spain, for example, has been the occasion for a campaign of mendacity of altogether fantastic proportions. Atrocities, casualties, and victories have been freely manufactured on the typewriter. Two matters about which the fog of propaganda has so well shrouded the truth that each continues to be the subject of conjecture are the situation of Majorca and the destruction of the town of Guernica. The Italian Government has firmly repudiated any design of annexing the smallest portion of foreign territory in the Mediterranean. Yet the Barcelona Government and its French sympathizers confidently assert that if the Italians are helping the Spanish Nationalists to hold the island, it can only be as the

result of some secret understanding for the future between the Italian Government and General Franco. Guernica was destroyed during the advance of the Nationalists to Bilbao, and many persons were killed or wounded. The Basques announced that Guernica had been destroyed by the bombs of a large force of aeroplanes operating from a Nationalist base. General Franco's headquarters, however, promptly retorted that the destruction was the work of anarchists fighting with the Basques. Which account is correct the world at large cannot tell.

Yet nothing is easier than to exaggerate the extent of the harm done by propaganda of this kind. Actually, the public nowhere requires to know the exact truth in order to form its opinion. The public is not a jury returning its verdict on the evidence. Ordinary men and women adopt an attitude in a given issue without recourse to conscious reasoning, although it often proves that they have reason on their side. They adopt their attitude by what looks like a kind of instinct. Because we in England are exposed to every wind of propaganda, it does not follow that we do not form definite opinions as readily as do the inhabitants of countries from which alien propaganda is rigorously excluded. When Italy began hostilities against Abyssinia, the Italian nation, which had hitherto viewed the prospect of a war with misgiving, rallied to its Government's support. Without knowing all that might have been urged in favour of the other side, the Italian nation was satisfied that the conquest of Abyssinia had become imperative. Equally without having weighed all the pros and cons, the majority of people here in England refused to believe that Italian policy had in this instance any justice behind it. Signor Mussolini certainly had a case, and his case was accessible to any one who cared to study it; and yet the circumstances in which Sir Samuel Hoare had to relinquish office were to show that we in this country would not even either contemplate the most probable issue of the Abyssinian campaign or recognize the inevitable impotence of the League. We showed ourselves in this matter to be as impervious to propaganda as we were blind to the realities of the situation.

So to-day it need not be doubted that the Japanese can advance impressive reasons for the military over-running of China; but to such reasons the majority of us in England are

indifferent: our sympathies have spontaneously gone to the Chinese. Again, circumstantial as was the account issued by the Spanish Nationalists of how Guernica was destroyed, only those English people already favouring General Franco accepted it. For the persons who follow the British Government in remaining neutral as regards the Spanish struggle just as much as for the persons who actively sympathize with the Barcelona Government, the correctness of the Basques' version has never been in question. More recently the outbreak of unrest among the Arabs in Palestine was accompanied by the publication in the Italian press of a series of allegations of unfair conduct on the part of British officials in that country; but these allegations, although their publication was reported here, did not lead a single Englishman to espouse the Arab cause.

Thus, the anti-British propaganda which the B.B.C.'s broadcasts in foreign languages are being designed to counteract has in all likelihood very little damaging effect. It avows itself to be propaganda, and it is too invariably tendentious not to be open to the suspicion, even by those who cannot check its statements, that it distorts or even fabricates its news. And all the world over people are sceptical of propaganda which they can recognize as such, and where they think they are in the presence of deliberate distortion or fabrication they are no more than amused.

That is the first thing in connexion with these broadcasts in foreign languages which has not, I think, so far been pointed out. It leads me straight to the second. The B.B.C. has carefully stated that the broadcasts are being confined to news. Great Britain may want to counteract propaganda; she is not going to engage in *propaganda* herself. The sentiment is admirable. Only, the B.B.C., and the British Government behind the B.B.C., seem to have overlooked that no summary of news can be other than a selection, of news, and that listeners must think it as easy to make the news selected for these foreign broadcasts support and justify British policy in international affairs as it would be to support and justify that policy by means of a commentary. But listeners will also consider that between the two there is this capital difference: that a commentary proclaims itself for what it is, and that a selection of news does

not. It therefore looks very much as if, albeit with the best of motives, the B.B.C.—which goes to such pains, not only in its normal national and regional programmes, but also in its printed publications, not to favour any one side at the expense of an opposite side—were now engaging willy-nilly in *propaganda* under cover of issuing news.

This may easily defeat its own end. A rumour, travelling out of the East, has reached these shores, according to which the Arabs are refusing to listen to the B.B.C.'s broadcasts because they prefer their news coloured. With true Oriental wisdom they prefer propaganda that they can recognize for what it is. But, apart from that, the broadcasts raise the question : can covert propaganda be a good thing ?

The broadcasts are addressed abroad, but the question is especially timely for reasons nearer home. It is commonly supposed that, although we here in England are exposed to every kind of contending propaganda from overseas, we are happily free from the effects of a similar local activity. That, like so many other expressions of English insularity, is a delusion. In fact, the British public is being subjected to a mass of propaganda with all kinds of objects and in ways of which it has no inkling. The appointment of a Public Relations Officer to the B.B.C. and of one to the Post Office has been found so satisfactory by the authorities that now a third has been installed at the War Office. These Public Relations Officers are really but agents of propaganda under another name. It is not to be imagined for a moment that they ever issue a statement not in every respect true ; but it has, nevertheless, to be recognized that their job severally is to propagate among the public a feeling favourable to the departments for which they work. Propaganda does not depend on the cooking of facts ; it is at its most effective when, while sticking to the facts, or to some of the facts, it relies entirely on its manner of presenting them.

Not that home propaganda is always scrupulous about the fact. The issue of the Zinoviev letter on the eve of the general election of 1924 is an event that will not readily be forgotten. That publication was perfectly timed to produce a revulsion of the electorate from the Labour party ; and it succeeded. The reason for this success was that the letter was generally accepted

at the time as being authentic. But to what extent it was authentic has since come to light; and we now see that its issue was simply a piece of covert propaganda. It succeeded simply because it was covert. Had the electorate known all the circumstances in which the publication took place, the reaction might have been different.

All four of our political parties maintain departments of propaganda. British industry, too, has followed since the War the example of industry in the United States, and to-day London Transport, the four great railway companies, such combines as Imperial Chemical Industries, trade federations, and a host of firms, all have their public relations officers and their press departments. For that matter, any person or corporate body with the requisite funds may get propaganda undertaken, provided of course there is no infringement of the law, for whatever object he or it likes. There is no need to maintain a special staff. Experts are now in independent practice, and they will act for a stipulated length of time and on a stipulated scale for a proportionate fee. The result is that the ordinary reader of a daily newspaper or weekly periodical often thinks he is reading news when he is absorbing the work of propaganda. Our press to-day abounds in what can only be called publicity by stealth.

In all this the press, it is true, plays a passive part. We have not yet developed co-operation between the advertising and editorial departments of a newspaper to the point of making it the fine art which it is in France. I remember being told by the night editor of a leading Paris daily newspaper that one of the chief Parisian stores had paid 28,000 francs to have published the short story in the paper that morning. Presumably somewhere in the course of the story there was an adroit reference to the store. In France that sort of thing is going on the whole time. With us, however, propaganda in the press does not yet involve, unless it is frankly in the form of an advertisement, payment to the newspaper or periodical concerned. Yet to-day not only do large advertisers in the principal English newspapers often ask for free puffs in the news columns and invariably obtain them, but also the newspapers and periodicals publish a great quantity of news items and photographs which owe

their existence and publication primarily to the desire of some outside party to propagate the name or qualities of a particular article of consumption or the aims of a particular association or movement. And it is not only news items and photographs that are used in this way, but also feature articles, gossip paragraphs, letters to the editor, and often part of the contents of what are called the women's pages.

No doubt it can be pleaded that those who write all this material or take the photographs do not accept payment from a newspaper or periodical if they are being paid elsewhere. Moreover, the favourite method of propagandists acting for commercial or industrial concerns is to instigate some event the newspaper record of which will be publicity and then to invite the Press to get it reported by men or women of their own staffs. That makes it very difficult to draw the line where legitimate news ends and propaganda begins. If a railway company persuades some personage to name a new engine, and a little ceremony is arranged, the railway company's sole object, of course, is to call the public's attention once more to itself and to impress the public with its enterprise. But many people like to read about new engines, and the event will be " covered " by the newspapers and news agencies in complete independence. They will be free, that is to say, to send or not to send their men to witness the event, as they please; and the " copy " thus provided by reporters will have, as a rule, to run with all the other " copy " that pours into an editorial office in a day its chance of getting into print. Likewise, if a big engineering firm invites the press to the trials of a new air liner, or a Dominion High Commissioner invites the press to the launch of a ship for that Dominion's mercantile marine, it can be argued that if such an event is recorded in the next day's papers, it is only because its " news value," i.e., its supposed capacity to interest the buyers of a newspaper, greatly outweighs any incidental propaganda that may be effected.

The aim, indeed, is to make the public conscious of—to imagine some examples—a railway company, an alcoholic beverage, a night club, a process of avoiding infection with tuberculosis, or a trade union, by causing the public to notice *almost unawares* the railway company's enterprise, the ancient customs observed

in connexion with the beverage, the fashionable people who patronize the night club, a celebrity's support of the process of avoiding infection with tuberculosis, or the trade union's entertainment of a distinguished former member. That is to say, the aim is to put the emphasis on something else and to make the public conscious of a concern, an article of consumption, or a movement, surreptitiously. On that account, however, the propaganda has to be covert, the publicity obtained by stealth. For that matter, the newspapers compel this by being pitiless in excising from " copy " any signs of propaganda they may detect.

The result is that the public is being subjected to a vast amount of insidious suggestion. Advertising, however formidable the objections to its methods, operates openly and without disguise. If people allow themselves to be hypnotized by advertisements, they do so, as it were, with their eyes open. But the propaganda to which I am calling attention does not operate openly, and it is disguised. It works insidiously, by stealth. Possibly every one of the innumerable articles, concerns, movements, and establishments on behalf of which it seeks to influence and shape public opinion is excellent, and the public can only benefit by being subjected to such a quantity of publicity concerning them. But that is not the question. The question is : can *covert* propaganda be a good thing ?

BILLIE CROW.

By A. G. Morris.

"GOSH! There goes Billie Crow," said Jim, and he put his fingers to his mouth, letting out a long, fiendish, piercing whistle.

Instantly there was a rush of boys from all quarters. Tom, Sam, Walter, Alfie, Charlie . . . shouting, running, kicking and whistling shrilly.

"There's Billie Crow," repeated Jim Barton. "Look at his legs, just look at 'em . . ."

"Like a grass-'opper, 'e is," shouted Sam, laughing.

"Penny toy, wot you winds up . . . " said Alfie.

"Cat on 'ot bricks," commented Walter, originally. "Lord, 'ow 'e picks up those great feet of 'is, sky 'igh . . ."

"Like a bloomin' chorus girl," yelled Charlie, a spotty youth with a foxy face.

Billie Crow saw and heard the boys, waiting at the end of the street. But he had to pass them to get home. And when he did get home there wouldn't be much sympathy waiting for him. He was sixteen years old, and he had never had a job of any kind. He never brought back a penny to help the long family of nine at Fish Court. So now, irresolute, lacking in all self-confidence, a target at home and a butt outside, he stood miserably in the filthy street, with his nail-bitten hands, his ungainly boots, his part-tight-part-loose ill-fitting suit; Bill Crow, Figure of Fun.

"Come on, Bill!" shouted Charlie, "Show us the 'igh kick."

"I gotter git 'ome some'ow," thought Bill.

He took a step forward, a sort of nervous jerk, which threw the knee high up in the air, so that the top part of his leg was almost at right angles to his body. The huge boot hung suspended awkwardly until it lunged downwards and hit the pavement. Then up went the other leg . . . . .

"Put weights on your clod-'oppers," called out Jim, "Or we'll 'ave to tie you up for dangerous."

"I can't 'elp me feet," said Bill, as the group of boys, reinforced by some girls, closed all round him.

"Got a bitter string?" asked Jim.

"Pull aht 'is own boot lices!" said Gertie.

"Why not 'is brices?" squealed Liz.

"Not me brices!" yelled Bill, almost in tears, "I gotter keep up me trahsers."

"Fency thet, nah," laughed Alfie. And all the girls tittered, all except Sarah.

Heads were popping out of the windows by now, and everybody was laughing. Everybody always laughed at Bill. Even the policeman was amused. Even the Curate smiled. Even the dogs grinned and ran about the city at Bill's approach.

"Ready, nah?" shouted Jim.

"Yus," cried Gert.

"One, two, three, "OP!" cried Jim, and the little crowd parted a fraction to release Bill.

They had taken the laces out of his boots and tied them round his legs. But Bill refused to budge.

"'Op!. I said," exclaimed Jim.

Bill was dumb and motionless.

"I'll twist 'is arm," said Charlie.

"'E's spoiling our fun," roared Alfie.

"I think you're mean beasts to torment 'im," said Sarah, suddenly.

"Sarah-Spoil-Sport," screeched Gert, pulling her hair hard.

"Listen to Billie's best girl!" yelled out Liz. "She's got measles by the look on 'er."

"Leave Sarah alone," said Bill, in his deep-pitched funereal voice.

"Leave Sarah alone!" mimicked Alfie, and Gert pulled her hair again, harder than ever.

"Get along, 'op frog," shouted Charlie to Bill, "I won't bag your girl, she squints . . ."

"She don't squint," said Bill, and everybody laughed again.

"She does squint," said Liz. "She squints 'orrible, and she's got a skinny neck, an' . . ."

"An' she's gotter crooked nose," interrupted Charlie. Look at 'er nose . . ."

It was then that Billie hopped. He hopped straight at Charlie, and punched his head. Charlie, taken by surprise, fell down but he was up in a flash and pommelling poor Bill.

"A fight!" yelled Jim. "Fair play, boys, undo 'is legs."

"Er nose *is* strite," croaked Bill, lunging out wildly, "Say 'er nose is strite." And, before they could stop him to untie the boot laces, he had stumbled and crashed down, with his head on the kerb.

"Gawd, I've killed 'im," blubbered Charlie, standing there, twisting his dirty fingers.

"Get 'ome," said Sarah. "Get 'ome, you beasts, and leave 'im to me. Don't you touch 'im, any on you. Murderers."

"'Ere comes a Copper," warned Jim, and the street cleared.

Sarah took Billie's ugly head in her lap. He opened his eyes and smiled at her.

"What's happened here?" said the policeman, joining the sad couple.

"Nothink," answered Bill, "I just slipped an' fell."

"Hmph," grunted the constable, with his eyes fixed on Billie's ankles. "And what about those boot laces?"

"Just a bitter sport," said Bill, "Wasn't it, Sarah?"

"Yes, Bill," she said, taking her cue from him, but her squinty eyes were wet.

"All right," said the policeman, and he walked away.

"Bit of a character, that lad," he thought.

"I better be getting on 'ome," said Bill.

"Let me tike your arm," said Sarah.

"If you're not ashamed of me legs," said Bill huskily.

"You're not ashamed of my nose, nor me squint," said Sarah.

"You don't squint," said Bill firmly, and the pair of them set out along the street.

"We belong now, don't we, Sarah? asked Bill.

"Yes," said Sarah, "We belong, two funny ones."

"I must leave you 'ere," said Bill, in Fish Court.

"Goodbye," said Sarah. "Goodbye . . dear."

It was six o'clock as Bill went up the dark staircase which led to " home." The Crow family lived in two rooms.

Mother was there now, with three of Bill's sisters, and Father was pulling off his boots in a corner. He had a red, beery face and angry eyes.

" 'Ere comes the bread-winner," he said, as Bill came into the room.

" Wot you done to yer 'ead ? " asked Mary.

" Fell down," said Bill.

" Fighting ? " asked Ma.

" Yus," said Bill.

Pa laughed.

" Fighting, my foot! " said Elsie. " Spec they tied up 'is legs agine."

" Gotter job ? " asked Edie.

" 'Im gotter job! " guffawed Pa, nastily, " Nobody wouldn't 'ave 'im, not if 'e pide."

" 'E's gotter big enough mouth ter fill," said Ma.

" You'll 'ave to go short now, me lad," said Pa. " I lost me own job ter day. Time you did summink for Ma and Pa."

" Some 'opes," said Elsie.

" Sleep an' eat. That's all 'e does," said Edie.

" An' walk abaht wiv that cross-eyed tart," said Mary.

" Try a circus," suggested Edie, " They tike freaks."

Bill sat down on the edge of the bed. He felt faint and his head swam.

" Swingin' the lead," said Pa.

" I'll look fer work termorrer," said Bill.

" Termorrer! " said Pa. " It's always termorrer with you, me lad."

" I'll not come 'ome agine till I got a job," said Bill.

And everybody laughed.

Now on the outskirts of the town there was a Circus ; not a very large, grand one, but decent and properly-run. There were clowns and acrobats and horses, and even a lion. There were a few freaks too, a fat lady, a living skeleton, a giant, a dwarf, and a woman with fins.

Billie had heard nothing about all this, but the next day, true

to his promise, he went out to look for work. He went with little hope, because he knew that his disability, his twitching limbs, ruled him out of almost all employment. People just looked at him and laughed, and told him, in a variety of ways, to get out.

That day he tried at a Hotel. He tried at a butcher's. He tried at a draper's. He tried at a factory.

Then he heard somebody say.

" Look at that boy! Has he escaped from the Circus ? "

That touched a chord.

Bill jerked his head sideways, in a typical gesture, and saw a great placard on the wall : BRANDON'S CIRCUS.

It was being held in Woodbridge Park, a twopenny bus ride from where Bill was standing and staring. He had twopence in his pocket, in half-pennies.

" I'll go and 'ave a look," he thought, " I'll go be bus, me legs is tired."

The bus wouldn't stop for Bill, but he was hauled on board by the conductor, who got kicked on the shins by the boy's windmill boots.

" You wanter look out," said the conductor. " Keep them legs to yourself."

" Sorry, sir," said Bill, forcing himself, by a huge effort, to shuffle along to a seat. " My fault."

" That's all right," said the conductor, rubbing his shin. " Where for ? "

" Woodbridge Park," said Bill, pulling out his money, and dropping some of the half-pennies.

" All thumbs, aren't you ? " said a fat man, in a grey bowler, who was sitting next to Bill.

" Sorry, sir," said Bill again, automatically.

" Don't mention it," said the Fat Man cheerfully. " Want to see the Circus, eh ? Bit early, aren't you ? "

" Not eggzackly *see* it, sir," replied Bill, feeling kindness in the man's voice.

" Not see it! What's a Circus for, then, if you don't see it ? "

" I gotter get a job," said Bill. He looked just an ordinary, rather ugly lad, as he sat there, twiddling his ticket nervously.

The Fat Man laughed, but not unkindly.

"Oho," he said. "So you want to join the Circus. Is that it?"

"Yus," said Bill. "You see, I ain't never 'ad a job, an' I don't bring no money 'ome, an' . . ."

"And so you're trying the Circus? Last hope, eh?" asked the Fat Man. "Well, me lad, what is it to be? Trapeze or tight rope? Or will you be shot out of a gun?"

"I thought I might be a freak, sir," said Bill.

"Good lord," said the Fat Man, in astonishment. "What put that into your head, boy? You're not a beauty, I will say, but I don't think folk would pay to look at your mug!"

"It's me legs, sir," said Bill, "I can't get no job, because of me legs."

"What's wrong with them?" asked the Fat Man, looking down at his companion's shabbily trousered limbs.

"They jumps, sir," said Billie.

"So they ought at your age. I could jump a five-barred gate then."

"I can't stop 'em jumping," explained Bill.

"Do your Dad and Mum know what you're up to?" asked the Fat Man.

"I said I wouldn't come 'ome till I 'ad a job, an' they said Good Riddance to bad rubbish."

"They said that, did they?"

"Yus," said Billie.

"Well, my name's Brandon," said the Fat Man.

"Cripes," said Bill.

"And," continued Mr. Brandon, "if you'll come along, I might find you a job. I won't promise, but I might."

"With the freaks?" asked Billie, brightening up.

"No," said Mr. Brandon. "Not with the freaks, laddie. But you might learn to groom a horse, or help shift the props, or something."

"You 'aven't seen me walk yet, sir," said Bill. "You mayn't want me then . . ."

"We'll see," said Mr. Brandon, standing up. "This is where we get off."

The sun was shining in the Park, as Billie and Brandon walked off towards the Circus tents.

" I'll 'ave a lot to tell Sarah," thought Bill.

Then people began to laugh.

Brandon, who had been thinking of other things, suddenly pricked up his ears, trained to catch the quality of applause or amusement.

" What's the joke here ? " he said.

" Me, sir," said Billie miserably, preparing for the usual curt dismissal, when his legs were fully noticed.

" You ? " asked Brandon. Then he saw Bill's boots in action, swinging up and down, jerking and wobbling fantastically. " So that's what you meant by jumping," he added.

" Yes, sir," said Bill. " I can't 'elp it, it comes."

" Lucky for you, maybe," said Brandon. " Come on, boy, quick."

" Lucky for me ? " wondered Bill. " Lucky ? "

He scrabbled along at full speed, his heart racing, his legs flying.

" Bit of a kangaroo, aren't you ? " said Brandon. " What's your name ? "

" Billie Crow, sir."

" And folk laugh at you, do they ? "

" Yus. They can't 'elp it . . ."

" Can't help it, eh ? Well, it's a gift to make people laugh, Bill."

That was a new angle, rather incomprehensible.

" Don't seem much of a giff to me, sir," said Bill.

" You wait," said Brandon, kindly. " You'll find out."

" I don't get you, sir," said Billie.

" Come on, Charlie," said Brandon, smiling.

" Not Charlie, sir," said Billie.

" All right, Bill," said Brandon. " My mistake."

That very night Billie appeared in the ring as a clown. It was a try-out, and he was deadly scared, but luckily nervousness only made his legs and arms wriggle and twist into stranger contortions than ever . . . .

" Quid a week and your keep," said Brandon afterwards. " You made 'em laugh. Split like sausages they did."

" Praps it was the others, sir," said Bill. " They was funny."

"Perhaps," said Brandon. "Yes, Bill, perhaps it was the others."

He winked at another man who was standing near, and they both laughed a lot.

But already Bill was learning that laughter could be a very pleasant thing.

So he wrote to Sarah, but not to Ma and Pa.

And it was only the first of many letters to her from all over England and Wales.

Now Brandon had not taken on Bill just because of his legs. Brandon, although he was a man of common earth, had a certain flair for assessing character and potential talent.

Billie had always been laughed at at home, he had been made a joke, and he had lost all faith in himself, but he had a good brain and in his new surroundings, finding that it really was a gift to make men laugh, he discovered self-confidence and he blossomed, if not exactly like a rose.

By much patience and observation he realized the necessity of control, even in clowning. He began by being merely a Figure-of-Fun, because his legs jumped and kicked, but gradually, with cooler brain and steadier nerves, he managed largely to enslave his limbs, to crescendo or decrescendo the contortions to the best advantage. He became, in his way, an artist.

Brandon watched him. One day he took him aside.

"You're getting along, boy," he said. "I'll give you a freer hand. Think out some gags, use your voice. It's funny. Try different clothes. I'll fix you an act of your own. You can pick chaps to help you with it."

"Thank you, sir," said Bill. "I'd meant to ask you for a chance."

"Well, Bill, you got it now," said Brandon.

After that encouragement Bill tried out many ideas, transforming himself, by turns, into an Eton-collared boy, a Soldier on parade, a Policeman on point duty . . . .

A car, with an impatient driver and a load of clowns, would drive furiously into the ring, only to be held up by an idiotic Constable, with a melancholy voice and an insatiable demand for licences.

" But you've had me driving licence," protested the clown at the wheel.

" Where's your dog licence, then ? " asked Bill.

" I ain't got a dog . . ."

" Marriage lines, then, and 'urry up."

" But I ain't married."

" Then you'll 'ave to walk . . ."

And so on, until at last the Motorist, producing a gun licence, would open up machine-gun fire on the tormentor and drive the car straight at him.

Then Bill, for the first time, would give his legs full play. All round the ring, with the car chasing him and the gun firing, he would shuffle and shamble, kicking, hopping like a jumping bean, falling over buckets of water, shinning up greasy poles, until he was finally shoved out of sight on the very nose of the automobile, to a running fire of applause, whistles and laughter . . . .

He was a success, a solo clown, who was mastering his technique, moulding his infirmities to his art, reading and thinking a lot . . .

But naturally it wasn't cake and ale all the time. Bill had the good-will of Brandon, but his quick success made him an object of jealousy to some of the older men, specially to those clowns who were pushed into second place by him.

" They'll soon get tired of your legs, Crow," said Morton, an old stager, with a tired, sagging mouth.

" Maybe," said Bill, good humouredly.

" Luck you got, more 'an skill," persisted Morton.

" I daresay," agreed Bill, refusing to quarrel, and pitying the older man.

" Well, any'ow, you can't come it over me or any of the boys," said Morton, " I bin twenty years in the ring."

" I hope you'll 'ave twenty more," said Bill.

His self-confidence was no longer rattled by such spleen. He had moved a long way from Fish Court, and he knew his worth.

" They was laughing at me, afore you was born," shouted the old clown, more and more irritated by Bill's calmness.

" Praps," said Bill, grinning, " they'll be laughing at you when I'm dead, or vicy-versy."

"You just look out then, and no oiling round the Boss," said Morton angrily. "There's some of us watching you, an' we won't 'ave no favritism . . ."

"I should go and 'ave a lay down, old boy . . ." said Bill, moving off to his quarters.

He wasn't worried. He trusted firmly in Brandon's common-sense and wide open eyes, and he was right.

The clowns went on strike one night, and tried to shove the blame on to Billie.

"'E's not playing a straight game with any of us, Boss, nor with you," said Morton, "and we won't go into the Ring with 'im."

"You needn't," said Brandon evenly, "but he can go into the Ring without you . . . . Come here, Crow."

"Sir," said Bill.

"Some of the fellows are a little bit tired to-night, I think. You'll do a turn alone. Can you manage?"

"I think so, sir," answered Bill.

So the strike became a lock-out . . . .

And Billie just went on learning his job, picking up aitches bit by bit, and taking no notice of spokes in his wheel.

Petty plots petered out feebly, and threats to bash him up ended in nothing worse than bruises, which may have been accidental . . . .

But through all his troubles and triumphs Billie never forgot Sarah.

In two years time, when he was eighteen, he was earning five pounds a week. Half of this he sent home, partly from a sense of duty, partly from pride in achievement; but he never gave name or address. He just put the money in an envelope and registered it.

Only Sarah knew where he was each week, and what he was.

"Any news of the grass-'opper, Squint-Eye?" asked Charlie, very tall now, with a cigarette hanging to his loose lip.

"Better ask 'is Pa," said Sarah. "They may 'ave 'eard sommink."

"You know more 'an you'll say," said Charlie.

"Not your business," said Sarah, "Mebbe 'e'll come back and fight you . . ."

"No fear, 'e'll end in the Work 'Ouse, that performing flea."

"Then 'e'll meet you there," said Sarah, walking away.

And nobody in Fish Court would admit that the weekly money came from Bill. The address was always *typed*.

"From Bill? No fear," said Pa.

"Then where does the brass come from?" asked Ma, in a filthy apron.

"Not from 'im," said Mary. But they all knew it did, and it stuck in their gullets. All the same they swallowed it.

"'Ow could 'e earn anythink?" asked Elsie. "With those legs?"

Almost at that very moment Billie, legs and all, was bounding incredibly out of the ring, dripping wet from innumerable buckets of water, and almost deafened by applause and delighted laughter.

"Boss wants to see you," said a friend.

"Righto," said Bill, and he went to find Brandon.

"Ullo, Billie," said Brandon, "I want you to meet Mr. Porson."

"'Fraid I'm a bit wet, sir," said Bill, smiling and shaking hands.

"Never mind that, Charlie," said Porson.

"Charlie?" thought Bill, and his mind went back two years, to the time when Brandon had made the same mistake in Woodbridge Park.

But Billie was more on the spot now. He knew what was happening to him. He flushed.

"Films, sir?" he said, speaking to Brandon.

"Yes, Bill, it's come," replied Brandon. "I knew I couldn't hold you long. Wouldn't be right."

Bill was silent. He put out his hand and gripped Brandon's hard.

"Don't worry about me, boy," said Brandon, "I'll watch you go up."

"You're a good man, sir," said Bill. Then he turned to Porson. "D'you really want me?" he asked.

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't, Crow," said Porson.

"You think I'll . . . make good?"

"You've got voice and walk," said Porson. "Personality

too. You made me laugh, sir, and that's not easy. Chaplin the Second, maybe. We'll soon find out with the tests. Brandon will release you when you wish. I hope it'll be soon."

Bill didn't look at Brandon when he next spoke.

" Yes, it'll be soon," he said. Then, with a rush of confidence, " I knew myself that it would come one day . . ."

" Brandon's told me a bit of your history, Crow," said Porson, "and I want to make a picture of you in that slum of yours, with the boys tormenting you, tying you up, making you hop and so forth."

" D'you mind if I go and write a letter, sir ? " asked Bill.

" Bless the boy, no," said Porson. " Then we'll sign you up Twenty pounds a week for the first picture. Then we'll see."

So Bill wrote to Sarah.

" Dearest Sarah,

" They want me on the films now. I hope you can be in my first picture too. I've kept away from you for all this time, and worked. But now I can see you again, and perhaps we needn't say Goodbye ever any more.

" Yours affectionately,

Bill."

Sarah cried for joy, when she read that, but she was a little afraid, because Bill had studied to spell like a book.

" And I do squint," she said to herself, in front of a tiny mirror. " An' 'e's seen lovely girls jump through 'oops, an' acrebats in spangled tights . . . ."

But she need not have been frightened, for Bill looked at her eyes, and they shone like stars ; he looked at her nose, and it was straight . . .

And Porson found in Sarah a most gentle and sensitive Cinderella. . . .

They were to film the old street, and there were jobs for many in the crowd. Even Pa and Ma were impressed.

" 'E allers made 'em larf," said Pa, very red and boozy.

" Remembered 'is 'ome, too," said Ma to a reporter. " Sent money as reglar as a clock. Me favrit boy, 'e was. Never a wrong word atween us . . ."

"Now, they're off," said Mary. "'Is nime's Johnnie 'Are, in the picksher."

"Gosh! There goes Johnnie 'Are," said Jim, and he put his fingers to his mouth, letting out a long, fiendish, piercing whistle.

Instantly there was a rush of boys from all quarters. Tom, Sam, Walter, Alfie, Charlie . . . .

"There's Johnnie 'Are," repeated Jim Barton. "Look at 'is legs, just look at 'em . . ."

"Like a grass-'opper, 'e is," shouted Sam, laughing.

And there he stood at the end of the street, irresolute, lacking in all self-confidence, a target at home and a butt outside, with his nail-bitten hands and his great ungainly boots . . .

So The Play, such a strange revival of old memories, wound itself out, until at last Bill-Johnnie was free to take Sarah-Maria into his arms, to kiss her and to tell her that he had always loved her. She looked up at him and smiled, and they were still like that, long after the cameras had stopped. They had forgotten time and place and crowds and fame. For The Play was the same as Reality.

ESTONIA AFTER TWENTY YEARS

By E. R. Sarv

THE post-War years witnessed the creation of many new States all aiming at constitutions based upon extreme democratic principles. But it soon became apparent that, however desirable such a government might be on ethical and moral grounds, it could only be successful when the people—as for instance in the case of Great Britain—had been trained by centuries of democratic evolution.

If the situation was to be saved, and the principles of democracy preserved, there was only one thing to be done, while leaving the ultimate power in the hands of the people, at the same time to control and direct this power until such time as the citizens were able to grasp the responsibilities as well as the rights of popular government. It is in the States that followed this course that one finds nowadays true democracies working towards the same ideals as those held by the countries which they once took as their models.

A few days ago one of the oldest of these young democracies, Estonia, celebrated her twentieth anniversary. During the two decades of her existence very little has happened in this most northern of the Baltic States startling enough to attract world-wide attention. Nevertheless she, like many others, has gone through an internal crisis, and a new form of democracy singularly attractive and suitable to the country and people has been contrived.

After being the battleground of Eastern and Western Europe for five hundred years Estonia at length obtained her freedom and independence through the World War. Twenty years of peaceful progress have now passed since this emancipation, and the Estonians—whom Professors A. J. Grant and H. W. V. Temperley in their standard work describe as " one of the best educated races in Europe "—have welcomed this opportunity

of consolidating and developing their national life—even though it has brought them no " headlines " in the world's press.

There is a very real reason why Britain should be interested in the affairs of this country, for during the Estonian War of Liberation in 1917 she played a decisive part in checking the spread of communism from revolutionary Russia through the Baltic. It was certainly a critical time for Estonia. The Russian army was within thirty miles of the capital by land, and the Russian fleet was rapidly approaching by sea. Then, at the crucial moment, a British naval squadron, under Admiral Sinclair, appeared in the Gulf of Tallinn. The Russian fleet was repulsed, and with the support—both material and moral—of the British ships, the Estonians were enabled to drive the enemy forces from their borders.

The first Constitution of Estonia comprised a State Assembly exercising political power on behalf of the people with little or no control from the guiding hand of a strong executive. In the matter of constituting governments, accepting resignations, and ratifying treaties, it was vested with the prerogatives of the head of a parliamentary state. The Government itself was reduced to the position of a mere executive committee, while the Prime Minister, though having the title, wielded none of the powers of a chief minister. These circumstances raised many obstacles to the smooth working of government, and at the same time it was found extremely difficult for any one of the various political parties to obtain a clear majority.

While a great deal of social and economic reconstruction was carried through despite these constitutional difficulties the State Assembly progressively lost prestige, as party strife and coalition manœuvres were allowed to interfere with the efficient running of the State. During the years of depression the situation deteriorated considerably, and the necessity for a strong executive became more and more apparent. The constitution was in urgent need of revision, but this could only be done, providing popular consent was obtained. A nation-wide publicity campaign was begun which resulted in the birth of a strong, new political movement, differing from any other previously known in the country by its pronounced fascist tendencies.

In the emergency the National Assembly placed before the people two measures for constitutional reform, but these were rejected in favour of a scheme submitted by the leaders of this "fascist" movement. The result was that by an impressive majority a new constitution was adopted which gave to the President almost dictatorial powers enabling him if necessary to oppose any parliamentary majority which might militate against the best interests of the State.

The constitution was scarcely adopted, however, before the leaders of the new movement, taking advantage of their temporary popularity, decided to launch an anti-parliamentary reaction and, threatened if necessary, even to use force to secure the presidential seat for one of themselves.

Fortunately for the country there was at this time at the head of Estonia's affairs a most far-seeing and disinterested statesman whose popularity not even all the intrigues of the new fascist movement could diminish. This was Mr. Konstantin Päts, the President, who saw quickly how dangerous it would be if the country were to be allowed to be made the sport of political adventurers. Using the extensive powers given to him by the new constitution he suspended the activities of all political parties, and, giving him wide powers and a seat in the cabinet, nominated as his chief executive General John Laidoner, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Thus began a new era. Right from the beginning Mr. Päts rejected the principle of excessive presidential power. He aimed at the formation of a new constituent assembly, and the re-organization and consolidation of the national social and administrative life of the country in such a way as to render any possible future change in the constitution possible only by appeal to popular referendum under normal conditions.

To bring about this desirable state of affairs Mr. Päts first of all appealed to and received from the people full powers of action on their behalf. He then convoked a National Assembly, the first chamber of which consisted of 80 members who were elected from constituencies by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage. In a second chamber there were 40 members, representative of and elected by various professional and

commercial bodies, including 10 members nominated by the President himself.

By the provisions of the new constitution (which came into force at midnight on the eve of 1938) Estonia remains a representative democracy governed by the strong executive necessitated by the geographical position of the country and the exigencies of a strong economic policy.

There is a two-chambered parliament and a president, and thus it has a certain superficial resemblance to the constitution set up by Mr. de Valera in Ireland. But, above all, it is a constitution which has been built upon the accumulated experience of these twenty years.

* * * *

The so-called Baltic *Bloc* or Baltic Union (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) has ever since the Great War, and particularly so in recent times, been considered by many to be in an extremely unenviable position. 'What will be the fate of countries who on the one hand are the possible victims of German *Drang nach Osten* and on the other of Russian ambitions on the Baltic?' it may well be asked. Certainly to the casual observer the position seems dangerous in the extreme.

Is there any real cause for alarm, however? There are two very good reasons why Estonia at any rate need not be too anxious about the situation. Germany's eastward-thrusting tendencies are held in check by the thought that, as things are at present, there is in Estonia a bulwark against communist interference, while Russia is given pause when she considers that she has as neighbour a democratic State with no special leanings towards a type of government inimical to her own. Between these counterbalancing forces Estonia feels herself safe and is additionally reassured by the fact that Russia's economic interests have been substantially removed from her Western border. Furthermore, relations between Russia and the Baltic States have for many years been completely normal, and, as will be clear to any student of foreign affairs, Russia, while wanting peace generally, is most particularly anxious to avoid hostilities in Western Europe.

Apart from normal international relationships the Baltic States have made it a rule not to concern themselves in the

internal affairs of other countries and, extending this principle to their own affairs, neither will they tolerate interference in their own. This policy has made it possible to maintain intercourse even on a friendly basis both with communist Russia and Nazi Germany.

General Laidoner, in a recent speech on the problems of foreign policy, made it clear that Estonia has rallied to the group of "alliance-free" states of which the Swedish Prime Minister has been the spokesman :

> "We do not want to bind ourselves with anti-communistic-nationalistic-fascistic pacts and treaties such as were urged upon us sometime ago under the so-called Eastern Pact. . . . We want to be neutral but we must protect that neutrality. Every nation, small or great, must be ready to resist attack. Only those small nations have grown strong that have been ready to defend themselves."

If at some remote future date a war were to break out in North-Eastern Europe, the States immediately concerned would be Latvia and Lithuania, which are on the direct line of march between the Russian and the German frontiers. It is conceivable that geographically, Estonia, up on the Northern Baltic, might be able to remain outside the dispute, but if she were bound by treaties she would be obliged to come immediately to the assistance of her neighbours. While such considerations as these have given rise to a body of opinion in Estonia which favours an isolationist policy towards Latvia and Lithuania, it is at the same time realized that whichever of the Baltic States was attacked the others could not escape being eventually drawn into the quarrel. At present, therefore, since their interests are so closely connected, it seems unlikely that the long-standing union of the Baltic States will be dissolved.

LABOUR'S RECORD IN NEW ZEALAND.

By F. L. W. Wood.

WITHIN a few months New Zealand will face a general election, and the voters will pronounce their verdict on the record of our first Labour Government. At present both sides admit that the country is prosperous. The Government claims that this is " to a major extent " due to its own activities, which will maintain and increase that prosperity in the future. The objective is social security, so that every person " able and willing to work " will be guaranteed what one might call the material basis of " the good life," while the aged and infirm will be cared for. This objective, in Labour's view, will be attained through strong leadership and control by a democratically elected government. The opposition retorts that New Zealand's present prosperity is due to the high prices received for our exports. Government spending, it is allowed, has helped for the moment, but at a heavy price to be paid later. Further, government " leadership and control " inevitably entangle private enterprise, which is vital to prosperity, within a paralysing mass of regulations. Thus by both sides attention is drawn to the underlying problem of the State's place in economic life. What can the State really do to make its subjects prosperous ?

The Labour Government's doctrine that it can do a very great deal is no new one in New Zealand. Ever since we have had self-government, but especially under the radical governments of the 'nineties and again during war emergencies and post-war depressions, politics have been dominated chiefly by direct State intervention in economic affairs. Such intervention has rarely concerned itself with theories or with ultimate objectives, but has arisen from the practical fact that the free-play of economic individualism often produced results which are both unjust and socially undesirable. There followed the conclusion

that the Government must discipline individual selfishness and inefficiency, and should guide the country's economic life as a whole. In a new country, with a relatively simple economic structure, such reasoning is more natural than in the complexity of the old world. Further, in a new country it is relatively easy for the State to act. Society is less rigidly organized. Issues are often clearer, and the working of economic laws more easy to follow. The result has been that New Zealand, like other new countries, is far less individualistic than might appear on the surface. As elsewhere, State intervention has steadily increased, and at least as much as elsewhere industries in difficulties have taken it for granted that the State should assist them, however much they may criticize " interference " in the abstract.

Under pressure of national crisis the preceding Coalition evolved and acted upon a fairly coherent plan to hasten and control the adaptation of New Zealand's economy to changed world conditions ; it was hoped to make the process less painful and more equitable than if it had been left to blind economic forces. In particular, relief was sought through the cardinal policies of exchange depreciation and reduction of local costs, which involved a spectacular extension of the State's sphere of action. So far, for example, the exchange rate had been normally left in the hands of the private banks. It was a big change for the Government to fix the exchange-rate, as a matter of general policy, at a figure different from that desired by the great majority of the bankers. Again, the policy of reducing local costs involved an attack on wage and interest rates. The State " cut " not only wages and salaries in the civil service, but (through the Arbitration Court) those in private industry. It achieved a big reduction in overdraft and discount rates by pressure upon the banks. Interest on the public debt (Government and Local Bodies) was reduced by compulsory conversion in 1933 ; and all rents, and interest rates on mortgages, etc., were also " cut " by legislation. In some cases, notably in the farming industry, the rights of creditors were indefinitely suspended. These proceedings often cut across law and custom and repudiated the sanctity of contract in the name of the national good. Further, the Coalition set up new institutions through which the State could

act on economic life. For example, the Reserve Bank was created and given control of currency and exchange, with considerable power over credit, and the Mortgage Corporation consolidated the various Government lending departments; both these institutions could be relied upon to carry out the Government's policy. Again, the basic farming industries were given strong Government leadership in the form of the Executive Commission of Agriculture, and a judicial procedure for the ultimate writing off of mortgage debts which exceeded the actual value of the farm.

In short, the Coalition handed on to the Labour Government a very active " social service " tradition. Labour proceeded to carry this tradition still further. As compared with the Coalition it had an optimistic idea of the possibilities of State action. Coalition spokesmen often defended the policy of " deflating " costs on the ground that New Zealand must always cut her coat according to her cloth—meaning that conditions within the Dominion were and always would be controlled by the prices realized for her exports. Labour, then in opposition, had taken the contrary view, that a wise financial and commercial policy could have virtually " insulated " New Zealand from the depression prevailing overseas. The key to the matter, it was urged, lay in local purchasing power. Deflation and rigid Government economy, by destroying purchasing power, deepened the depression they were supposed to relieve. What was needed was a policy of " expansion." Generous social services and a vigorous public works policy were essential, and, above all, wages should have been maintained. Through such means, said Labour spokesmen, the Government held the power to maintain standards of living. The depression was unnecessary; it was due to human folly, not fundamentally to the operation of forces beyond local control.

The Labour Party's optimism was in part a matter of faith, for its leaders were temperamentally inclined to believe that problems would yield before the enthusiasm of men who combined good will with energy. But it was reinforced also by the belief that concrete plans were actually available. These plans were summarized in Labour's election platform of 1935, which in the official view had been perfected by careful study

during the long years spent in opposition. It could, therefore, be put into operation as soon as the Law Drafting Office had translated it into statutory terms. The result was that, in fact, the programme was acted upon after the election with remarkable rapidity and completeness.

One of the first laws to be passed was that reforming the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. A few small changes in the law brought the Bank strictly under Government control. Its Governor is, as before, appointed by the Government, but the shareholders were bought out (full compensation—the market value of shares on the day of the General Election—was granted), and the Directors now hold office during the pleasure of the Government. The Bank's function is now "to give effect as far as may be to the monetary policy of the Government as communicated to it from time to time by the Minister of Finance." At the same time the limits on the amount of accommodation which the Bank could grant to the Government were relaxed or removed, and its powers over the private banks were greatly increased. It is perhaps worth remarking that the Reserve Bank of New Zealand cannot use many of the means by which the Bank of England more or less subtly influences monetary and financial operations. Therefore, a degree of influence which can be taken for granted in England must in New Zealand be provided for in statutory form. In particular, the Reserve Bank was given power to coerce the Trading Banks by varying the amount of reserves which they must deposit with it. Further, they are now compelled to disclose to the Reserve Bank the general tendency of their credit policy by giving regular information about overdrafts authorized but unused. Finally, the Reserve Bank is given the power to control the allocation of sterling exchange—a power, which if exercised, would enable it to regulate imports.

There is little indication, that the social control of credit will be used according to the ideas of Major Douglas. Labour's election campaign did in fact attract many social credit votes, and there are Douglas-minded men both in the caucus and in the Cabinet. But the policy of Mr. Nash, as Minister of Finance, follows different lines. In his view the function of credit is to enable labour to turn raw materials into

consumable goods. The State's main duty in the matter is to see that when Labour, materials, and demand for finished goods are all available, proceedings shall not be held up for lack of credit. In these circumstances, the guiding principle is that the Central Bank should provide the necessary credit on the condition that corresponding assets are created. This idea is illustrated, for example, in the Government's Housing Scheme. There was an admitted shortage of houses in New Zealand, and in the Government's view they were unlikely to be supplied in sufficient quantities and sufficiently cheaply by private enterprise. Accordingly, the State has undertaken to build and let houses. A new Department was created for the purpose, and organized with astonishing speed and efficiency, and as a result of its work, State Houses are already being built in most of the bigger towns. They are, it is said, of uniformly high quality but attractively varied appearance, and the Department claims that it is being besieged by would-be tenants. This whole scheme is financed by Reserve Bank credit; but the rent paid by tenants is calculated to include repayment of the Bank's loan during the lifetime of the houses.

The Housing Scheme is typical of the Labour Government's attitude towards economic problems. The party's avowed objective is Socialism, but the Prime Minister is always at pains to avoid discussion of the Government's proposals in terms of any such socialist objective. His appeal is always to common sense; in his own phrase, "the socialization of the means of production will look after itself, if we face the current problems in an intelligent fashion." He says that the Government is only too willing that goods and services should be provided by private enterprise, so long as private enterprise will do its job well. The State is plainly called upon to interfere in two main instances: when private enterprise cannot provide the necessary services except perhaps at very high price, and where it has got into difficulties from which it cannot extricate itself. In more general terms, wherever there is inefficiency and waste, there is a *prima facie* case for Government action, for inefficiency harms both those engaged in the industry concerned and also the community as a whole.

There are many examples of action along these lines. Price-cutting in the retailing of petrol and of bread led to price-fixing by Order-in-Council (under legislation passed by previous Governments). Overlapping and "economic waste" in the transport system (particularly competition between road transport and the State-owned railway system) has accelerated the existing tendency for all transport services to be minutely regulated if not directly operated by the State. Already a number of motor-services have been bought, while the Minister of Transport says that it may be necessary to have unified control before real efficiency can be obtained, and he cites by way of example the London Transport system. Again, "inefficient" marketing methods in foodstuffs led to Government enquiry, and power has been taken by the Government to regulate selling methods very closely, and if necessary to buy the goods and market them itself. In more general terms, an Industrial Efficiency Act has been passed, which aims at rationalization under Government leadership, though the consent of a majority of those operating it is necessary for reconstruction of an existing industry. And in all these cases, the trend is the same. It is towards Government leadership or regulation, which is used in each case to fix and stabilize the conditions under which industry operates. This is done sometimes directly, and sometimes through such agencies as the restored arbitration system, to which have been added the new principles of the basic wage, compulsory unionism, and the forty-hour week. The effect is to give to each element in the industrial structure a definite and assured position, provided that its work is carried on with "reasonable efficiency." This new security is used to persuade tradesmen to accept a rate of profit which is lower, because steadier, and to promise their employees higher and more secure wages.

The same broad trend is plain in Labour's agricultural policy. In New Zealand farming is comparatively secure from such disasters as droughts and floods, but the prices received for farm produce on the world market have fluctuated wildly. For example, between 1925 and 1935 the price received for a cwt. of butter varied between 64/- and 230/-. This extreme insecurity led Labour, while in Opposition, to put forward a scheme for

giving the farmer guaranteed prices. The party promised, if returned to power, to pay guaranteed prices for primary products, based on average returns to farmers during " the past eight or ten years." Further, it undertook to negotiate trade agreements with our customers overseas, so that a maximum amount of our primary produce should be sold overseas in an orderly manner.

The scheme as explained during the election campaign was a little nebulous, but it certainly played its part in attracting the votes of the small farmers. With the election won, it had to be reduced to concrete form. In the first instance it has been applied only to the dairying industry (which supplies about 2/5th of our exports) on the ground that here the need was greatest. The State now takes over all dairy produce for export, buying it in a finished state when it is placed on the overseas steamer. The price paid varies according to exacting standards of quality. The butter and cheese is then shipped to England, and its sale is managed by the Government's Dairy Sales Division (previously the London end of the producers' elected Dairy Board), who distribute it through Tooley Street agents. This marketing arrangement follows closely the plans for more orderly marketing which had been worked out by the old Dairy Board, before its functions were virtually taken over by the Government, and it is generally admitted to be a great improvement on older methods. As regards the farmer in New Zealand, he can now count on a definite price for his dairy produce, a price which is fixed each year for the coming export season. Further, the Government took over and simplified its predecessor's policy of keeping interest rates low, and of writing off mortgage debts which were greater than the present value of the farm. This point is of great importance in view of the part played by mortgage finance in New Zealand farming. Before the depression it was estimated that 1/3rd of the average farmer's expenditure was made up of interest and rent. It is on the whole of less importance to the farmer that agricultural wages have been raised and stabilized : for the New Zealand farm employs comparatively few wage-earners. The original idea seems to have been price stabilization over a period of years, not subsidy, though it could be argued that the country can afford to pay a certain price for the benefit

of giving efficient farmers a steady income. But if the process goes too far it would have an inflationary tendency, through expansion of central bank credit.

This tendency is feared all the more because of other "expansionist" tendencies in Labour policy. Thus, wages have been restored to the 1931 level, both within and without the public service, and the amount paid in pensions to the aged and infirm has been greatly increased. These steps, it is claimed, increase "social security" and help to lift the purchasing power of the people. but at the cost of considerable expenditure by the State. Still more important, however, is capital expenditure on public works. Labour came to power pledged to carry out the "vigorous public works policy" which (while in opposition) it had demanded as an anti-depression measure. Accordingly the Public Works Department was re-equipped (the Coalition had not favoured labour-saving machinery, because its object was to spread employment), a new model agreement was concluded between the Department and its employees, and the resuscitated Department was set to work with a speed exceeding that of the boom years. The current budget provides for public works expenditure of £17,367,000. This money is to be provided by the funds of various Government departments : but there is a plain hint that if necessary central bank credit will be called upon.

The Conservative criticism of these proceedings is not that the various public works are in themselves undesirable, or even that New Zealand cannot afford them. It is that such public works should have been kept for times of depression. By spending now, when she is prosperous, New Zealand is depriving herself of reserves which should be kept for the next depression, the onset of which will tempt a Government without resources to experiment in currency inflation. Further, it is urged, New Zealand is incapacitating herself to meet further crises by restricting her whole economy within a rigid framework of Government control. Directly or indirectly, the State is fixing more and more firmly the conditions under which labour shall be employed. To an increasing extent it is fixing the prices at which raw materials may be bought and finished products sold. All this, it is claimed, limits progressively the

extent to which a man of exceptional gifts may make use of his talents to the benefit alike of himself and of the community. It tends to reduce the whole society to the level of an unimaginative civil service.

Finally, it is held, practical difficulties have already shown the unsoundness of the Government's procedings. For example, as throughout the world, the cost of living is rising, and each increase is widely attributed to the Government. Certain difficulties have already arisen within the Dairy industry because the cheese-producers believed themselves to be less favoured by the guaranteed price than were the farmers supplying butter factories. It is pointed out, further, that fixed prices may lead to over—or under—supply unless the production side of industry is also brought under control. Again, some manufacturers are complaining that Labour's legislation has so increased their costs that they cannot compete with imports. And the list of complaints is growing so as to provoke the question : are these emerging difficulties symptoms that the Government's whole policy is mistaken, or are they minor problems of the kind which appear continually when any constructive policy is being carried out, and which can be met by minor modifications ?

Some of this progress may have to be paid for later, and the real test will come should export prices again fall heavily. Perhaps the main question at present at issue is whether the Government will equip itself to meet the test by evolving what seems to have been lacking up to this point, namely, a clearly conceived and coherent plan of how to reach a well defined goal. Many of the current difficulties seem to arise from an empirical method of approach. The Government has been guided by a broad humanitarianism, by an acute sense of practical problems demanding attention, by a group of policies to which it became pledged while in opposition and by some active work and thought applied to sections of the national economy. The present question is whether Cabinet Ministers will give themselves time to think about the problem as a whole. Of some Ministers at least, it may be said that the less they allow themselves to be absorbed by day to day detailed administration, the more likely they will be to achieve enduring results.

EBB AND FLOW

By Stephen Gwynn

CERTAINLY the dictators keep the world guessing. Three facts, or groups of facts, in the opening week of February stand out. First of these is the renewal of piracy around the Spanish coast, and renewed this time with definite direction against British shipping; one vessel sunk by a mysterious submarine, the other destroyed by bombs from aeroplanes boldly marked as General Franco's. In each case a foreign "observer" representing the Non-Intervention Committee, was on board. Second comes the Italian declaration of willingness to sink at sight any submarine observed on or near the recognized trade routes. Now, does this mean that General Franco is acting in opposition to the wishes of the Italian dictator, although still beholden to him for supplies in men and material—to the point of having in his armies strong Italian contingents—which keep themselves distinct, and over whose exploits Italy is bidden to exalt? If it does not mean this, what does it mean? The dictatorial formula for answers to such action as General Franco's aeroplanes (at least) have unquestionably taken, is on record: the answer is to hit back and hit hard. Great Britain however, is in a position to hit back more effectively and less brutally; she can either capture or if necessary sink important units of Franco's sea force, or can immobilize the whole. This is so evident that one must presume either that General Franco counts on indefinite impunity for insult and damage to British power, or that he is deliberately provoking reprisals. But everybody knows that England cannot be indefinitely challenged with impunity. What then, if he desires to see the British take action, can be his motive? Is it in the hope that in such a case Italy's limited intervention will become unlimited?

Freebooting and Swashbuckling

Nothing in the situation was a graver symptom than the

almost complete absence of editorial comment in the *Times*. If a Labour Government were in power it would have been almost impossible for it to avoid treating this aggression as a *casus belli* ; pressure from their own side to act, taunts from the other if they did not act, would have been irresistible. These are the moments when one may be thankful for a Government which is National not only in name but in aspiration. And until the state of the world alters out of recognition, I do not see how any kind of purely party government can be tolerable. One must have an organization that represents the will of at least three-fourths of the community.

That conclusion is driven home by the third of the disquieting facts which have been referred to. Herr Hitler has carried out a concentration which ensures that the collective will behind his amazing machinery shall function in a smooth unity. Nobody seems to know the precise reason for each individual change but the main purpose is unmistakeable—unification. It is known that at a crucial moment the dictator's policy encountered opposition in his central cabinet. General von Blomberg at the head of the Army, Baron von Neurath at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Schacht at the Ministry of Economics all opposed the move into the Rhineland as too risky. Herr Hitler took his own way successfully. The men who opposed him were not discarded at once, but they are now, none of them, in their former position. The man whose power is increased is Goering—now Field Marshal. It would be difficult to draw any deductions from the change pointing to a less aggressive policy.

There is this further consideration. If the British power submits to the injuries inflicted by General Franco's aeroplanes and his submarine, will the governing forces in Germany anticipate resistance from Great Britain to any step they may take, short of direct attack on British territory or on the Rhine frontier ?

Eclipse of the Military Chiefs

Still, there are more cheerful aspects to dwell on. Herr Hitler has found it necessary to carry out an operation very similar to that undertaken by his opposite number in Russia ; and his purge is much less revolting than Stalin's. It, again, was some whatless bloody and treacherous than the German clearances of June 30th, 1934.

The dictators are less nervous in taking steps to assure their supremacy ; they feel less need to " mak' siccar ; " it is possible that some of those whom Stalin dismissed may still be alive. Herr Hitler had indeed to move with some degree of caution, for he was striking at the army, and although the army assisted his purge in 1934 it was not gratified by the simultaneous " liquidation " of General von Schleicher. One may perhaps guess that these critical decisions were taken because the army's *esprit de corps* had been shaken by insistence in army circles on a tradition that had lost its binding power. General von Blomberg married his secretary. Under the old régime, this breach of caste would have carried dismissal as a matter of course. Part of the army at least thought that Herr Hitler should take the same view of the alliance as Kaiser Wilhelm would have taken. But it is simply not conceivable that in the new Germany that opinion should be universal throughout the Service. Herr Hitler may have seen a way to get rid of a military adviser whose " knowledge and courage " had seemed to him deficient " shortly before the occupation of the Rhineland." To retain him in his post would have offended part of the army, to dismiss him on the ground of his marriage would have offended another part ; the solution was to fill the supreme military office not by promotion but by absorption of it into the *Führer's* own attributes. A step is thus taken which could not have been taken without risk if General von Blomberg had not by his personal action in a private matter weakened the professional support behind him.

It is curious to recall that in 1914 during the crisis which followed the Curragh incident, Mr. Asquith had recourse to a similar expedient, taking over the War Office. The purpose then was to allay public disquiet, and silence the criticism which would have been directed against the choice of any man less supremely responsible. That may have weighed also with Herr Hitler. But it was certainly not the desire of Mr. Asquith to aggrandize his personal power. That desire is a necessary part of a dictator's mentality ; and we may take it that whatever power of contributing independently to the shaping of policy had been hitherto vested in the military chiefs has now disappeared. There is likely to be some discontent in the army ;

but this matters far less to Herr Hitler than it would to Stalin. The facts of geography must always give to some Russian commanders some freedom of initiative; Germany is all concentrated within a small boundary. Herr Hitler has this advantage that he has not so much need to be suspicious of able men as his Russian counterpart—that other spiritual heir of Lenin.

* * * *

There is nothing new to observe about the Far Eastern situation, except that the United States authorities have been pushed by internal signs of revolt into a denial of anything that could be called co-operation with Great Britain. America will spend what she considers necessary for her own safety; the American navy "will stand on its own feet"—which is emphatic enough, though a curiously unnautical metaphor. But whatever signs of sense there were in the Washington Agreement have vanished, up the chimney of a furnace where uncontrolled expenditure is stoked up. It is curious how Americans—at least, in the United States—abhor anything that in the least recalls the idea of a League of Nations. Professor L. P. Jacks thinks that the word "League" is the bugbear—he proposes in a letter to the *Times* that we should begin calling it the "Society." But the French have been calling it that since it began; yet this fact has not endeared the organization either to Germany, Italy or the United States. We have to face the fact that several Powers, and Great Powers, are repudiating the idea of corporate action, and insisting on unlimited individual sovereignty. But no other Great Power goes so far in its individualism and repudiation of partnership as the United States. American interests, and American moral principles, so far as one may judge, are offended gravely by Japan's action; but the notion that the United States should present a common front with Great Britain, France or any other State is ruled out as heretical and damnable. Elsewhere, the most individualist and self-seeking nations and Governments form leagues, ententes, and an axis; but you do not catch the United States so compromising its democratic freedom.

'I'm alone' still the Watchword of U.S.A.

I do not think that by changing names or even by altering

parts of the Constitution one can bring the League back into usefulness. Better to leave what stands standing until the world becomes convinced of the necessity for some such machinery of corporate action, as will inevitably happen, though no man can count the cost of that conversion. The League will become a reality when all the Great Powers feel it necessary to their own reasonable safety.

The reason why it failed, as it has failed, was not that Germany, Italy and Japan seceded; only one secession mattered, and that was the initial withdrawal of the most outspoken supporter of its principles. America was so convinced that it could never have need of the League that it left those States which needed it to run the business. Great Britain for several years felt itself taking part in a philanthropic enterprise, for the good of other people. It was real to France from the first because France felt the need of corporate protection not only for herself but for the new States whose existence she was concerned to preserve. The League of the future, the efficient League, will be based on such realistic considerations.

A Jewish Homeland

For the moment, what remains of it does in some measure cumber the ground. Take the case of Palestine. The situation there is controlled—so far as it can be said to be controlled—by British forces; what matters more, it is governed by British promises which, unfortunately, cannot all be kept, since the promise to Jews contradicts the promise to Arabs. But because Great Britain holds Palestine under mandate from the League, the matter cannot be dealt with by British statesmanship alone. Decision is urgently needed, because throughout Europe the plight of the Jewish race becomes worse monthly. A Commission has proposed a solution which means giving to each of the parties half or a part of what they aspire to; and naturally enough, both repudiate it. But Dr. Weizmann, for the Jews, holds tenaciously to the principle, which it offers, of creating in Palestine a purely Jewish State, fully autonomous. That principle appears to answer to the world's need which is that Jewish energy and Jewish wealth shall be utilized to create a home for the Jews. People doubted whether the thing could be done; no one doubts now—least of all the Arabs—that it can be done, in Palestine.

No other place has the necessary attraction, the historic appeal. As a British Dominion, a Hebrew State in Palestine would be a strength to the British Empire and an addition to the prosperity of the world—and to such Arabs as live within that State. The Arab world is wide, and much of it is now under Arab rule, in consequence of a war in which Arabs fought with decisive backing from Europe; backing so powerful that Europe is entitled to a decisive voice in the disposal of Palestine. The need of the Jews is also the need of Europe—the need of countries like France and England which generously keep an open door for the expatriated; the need also of Poland for instance and such other States as feel that they have in their territory too large a Jewish element.

If the League were capable to-day of decisive action, if too, it possessed authority, then the matter could and should be settled by the League in the interests of Europe and of humanity. But as things are, the only possibility of decisive action rests with Great Britain, and the only shape which that action can take is to remove all restriction on Jewish immigration, with the avowed intention of letting the Jews make it *de facto* a Jewish country, if they can, by superior energy, brains and in the end by superior numbers. If that intention were now made plain, Arab interests could be bought out where it was necessary; but many Arabs would find it their interest to acquire prosperity under the direction of Jewish enterprise. All that is needed is to give opportunity for legitimate penetration and infiltration, the Jews buying and working their way in; with a clear understanding that, if and when the Jews become a majority in the country as a whole, the government of the country will become Jewish. But to go on as at present with no clearly defined policy, with a nominal enforcement of law in which neither Jew nor Arab can see the expression of his own native will is making the worst of both worlds.

Australia's celebration at the finish of her third half-century sets one thinking. A continent rather than a country is given over to seven and a half millions of the English-speaking race;

The Australian Type

racially mixed from all the stocks in these islands, but with no competing element from other lands—and none from its own. In New Zealand the

Maori factor is not negligible; in South Africa besides the two rival strains, English and Dutch, there is the coloured man; in Canada the French represent the oldest colonial type that is now in the British Commonwealth; so old that they have evolved a folk song. *Habitant* chants go back to the time when France was writing "*J'aime mieux ma mie, o gué, j'aime mieux ma mie*" —where as Molière said, "*la passion parle toute pure.*" Those refrains are heard through nearly all that has been written best in English about Canada, and one may say that Canada has a voice for us. So has South Africa, charged with dramatic echoes of conflict and the clash of strong personalities—Boer and Briton—both of whom were determined to bring their vision of South Africa home to the world's imagination. New Zealand, I confess, leaves my imagination indifferent; one is only aware of a small but competent community, living in conditions of climate not wholly unlike our own. But Australia is perplexing. All the environment is almost fantastically different, and yet the conditions are such that the English race grows to magnificent physical development—swift and strong. Australian troops had no superior on the Western front; some good judges would say they had no equals. By general consent, they were different from English, Scots, Welsh, Irish or Canadains; but how should one define the difference? What do any of us who have not visited Australia know about Australians—except indeed from watching their cricketers? That was not by any means without instruction; we learnt that Australia, playing the most quintessentially English of games with great dexterity and determination, refused to be bound by English traditions. To pull a ball from the offside to the leg was not merely counted bad play, it was bad form; and so your accomplished English batsman could be relied on to place the ball only where it was proper. When the Australians began to hook it to an undefended leg side, the stroke was thought ugly and ungentlemanlike. But since the Australians went on doing it, and scoring fours very fast, England conformed. England allowed its opinion to be changed on a question of what was, or was not, cricket; and only the very old can remember the superstition which schoolboys sixty years ago were brought up to accept.

No respecting of persons, no respecting of tradition; the Australians see themselves like that. But one has a feeling that it will be better for them when they have engendered a tradition of their own with its binding force. They need someone to make songs for them; and the need was made plain when, in deference to Australia's desire, Adam Lindsay Gordon was given a niche and a bust in the Poets' Corner of the Abbey. Yet of his short life—thirty-seven years—less than half was spent in Australia; and none of his boyhood. He had lived the life of the country, a mounted policeman when there were still bushriders to hunt; then for a couple of years, member of parliament; but, above all, and always a horsebreaker and steeplechase rider. The best of his verses comes when they give the thrill of bold horsemanship or the pulsing beat of hoofs; but nothing that is essential fixes the life of them to Australia. Unbookish men would like them, and like them for what is best in them; but Kipling has shown that unbookish men will like even more work that has the same qualities (and not the same defects) of slack nerved expression.

Australia is still waiting for her poet. Even in prose I do not know that anything has brought Australia, or any part of it, home to me. Yet Miss Helen Simpson, who writes so well, writes with a feeling for the growth, the evolution of Australia's people and makes me begin to feel that they are not just merely Englishmen, Scots and Irishmen at the other side of the world.

A little volume issued from the Latin Press discloses a surprising vein of interest in a most remarkable man. Sir Basil Blackett certainly took a first class in *Literae Humaniores* at Oxford before he went to the Treasury, but throughout his career men associated his name with the mastery of finance. Few would have suspected him of an "absorption in Byzantine Greek" which led him into translating devotional poems by St. Gregory Nazianzen, while he was still Controller of Finance in Whitehall. Later, in the months before his death (a motor-crash cut him short at fifty-four), he had turned to versions from mediæval Latin—at a guess, under an impulse given by Miss Helen Waddell, who writes a foreword about him with more than her usual seductive enthusiasm—and that is not saying a little.

Lit. Hum. **and Finance**

She lets us know that Sir Basil inherited the taste for monkish literature from his father, a parson, who called his sons after early Fathers of the Church : Basil of Cæsarea, who in a sense stood sponsor for the future Finance Minister, was a friend of St. Gregory's. I give first an example from the Greek—St. Gregory's evening prayer :

> " True Word of God, I have been false to Thee
> For whom this day was hallowed, thine to be.
> I gave my promise, true was my intent
> But on this path and that astray I went
> Not all-illumined, Saviour, by Thy light ;
> Besmirched, bewildered, kneel I here to-night ;
> Give me Thy light again, Christ, make my darkness bright."

But here now is the opening of a hymn for the Burial of the Dead from Prudentius, who like St. Gregory, lived through most of the fourth century :

> " Now, Earth, to thy keeping we send him
> In thy fostering bosom we leave him.
> 'Tis a man ; to thy care we commend him ;
> He is dead, he is noble ; receive him.
>
> In this body a soul had his dwelling
> By the breath of his Maker was fashioned
> In wisdom and knowledge excelling
> For the Christ and His Kingdom impassioned."

Miss Waddell says of these translations that one is " among the supreme things of the kind " and I take her to refer to this superb lyric which sweeps harmoniously in nine stanzas to restful close. But how extraordinary it is to find such a man, so completely trained and versed in concrete science, setting his brain to reproduce in English Hildebert's Hymn to the Trinity, which strings with a passion of hurry into short rhyming lines the subtleties of One in Three.

> " Coeternal evermore
> Neither after nor before "—

Altogether between these translators and Miss Waddell's tribute to her friend, we have here a singular side-light on a man whose untimely death robbed the Commonwealth of a rich asset. All knew that. But how many guessed that there was behind that " ruthless, logical, scientific brain," " a sceptic apprehended by God".

Not many, even of those who have been in some degree " scholars," keep up with Latin and Greek through the medium

of mediæval literature. It would be interesting to know how many of them continue to read the classics habitually. I remember being taken in Italy by an Italian acquaintance (he and I spoke French) to call on a charming and erudite old priest, who unfortunately knew neither French nor English. I could read Latin as easily as French, but I had never adventured myself in speaking it and so stood tongue-tied—too shy to attempt what should have been natural. There had been a defect in my education. We could of course have adjusted our pronunciation to some sort of common denominator; but I remained hypnotized by the illusion that Latin is a "dead language." People should be taught that it is not; it still has living uses, by no means only in ritual.

The Speaking of Latin

Youths with a Catholic upbringing are more easily aware. Some time ago, while the big electric works on the Shannon were in progress, a farmer's son of my acquaintance saw at a cross-roads outside Limerick a group obviously of foreigners obviously in doubt as to their way; and he stopped with the kind notion of offering them a lift—for he was driving. But they had no English, he no German, and he could not ascertain whether they wanted to go into the town or to the works or the river. Then a brain wave struck him and he said *Quo vadis*? Instantly one replied *Ad* Limerick. So they got their lift. I doubt if any scholar, of my year, would have had that bright idea. Latin was learnt as a task, and also, in many cases, for pleasure. We certainly got great enjoyment out of mouthing our passages in Virgil, in a pronunciation in which Virgil assuredly would have scarcely recognized himself. But I believe that English verse recited by an Indian student who has not lived in England sounds strange to English ears. That does not mean that he has not a sincere enjoyment of the poetry, and if I were teaching English to an Indian, I would say, 'Hurry on to get a grip on the meaning, *enunciation*, do not worry over details of grammar, and above all do not be delayed in your career by questions of pronunciation. You will probably never get these quite right; but you can open up your channels of communication with what the human mind has stored in another language, keeping its own peculiar quality and value'.

LIVING AND WRITING

By V. S. Pritchett

HE SUMMING UP, by W. Somerset Maugham. *Heinemann.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

IME GATHERED, by W. B. Maxwell. *Hutchinson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This book is Mr. Maugham's stock-aking. He has been writing, spending imself all his life—what has he left in ock? Confession? No, Mr. laugham has none of Mr. Wells' rgent need to rush out and tell the orld nothing with the breathlessness f a cosmic news review. Reminis-ence? Mr. Maugham is not a bore. o, what he has got left is a collection f ideas, hitherto unsorted, of a rofessional nature, and *The Summing p* is an account of how he came by iem. His own beginnings, the nditions of his profession, the judg-ient of critics, his experience of the eatre, views on prose style, the ecessity of money, the shrewdness of ie planning of his career carried out ith a financier's exactitude, the ecessary if disappointing discovery id filing for future use of his own mitations, and so on to the problem the meaning of life itself as it has een variously propounded to him by ie philosophers, the religious, the ystics and æsthetes—such are the ain lines of his book. Where others udge round the well-worn track of ieir failures and successes, Mr. laugham has—though with far less armth and happiness in his curi-ity than Montaigne—taken up the osition of spectator of himself. npersonal, sceptical and never timate, he hides an injured and fensive heart behind the fluent mind the impervious man of the world. I have read his book twice, the first time because he is the most readable writer living, one whose performance is always so striking for its smoothness in the first canter round the ring; and the second time because, deeply interested though I was, I could hardly remember a line he had written from page to page. He is the least natural of writers; nothing strikes out with the uncouthness of nature, therefore nothing sticks. That clear, colourless style, modelled so assiduously on Swift and Dryden with its odd, occasional lapses into the English of the gossip columns, had flowed through my mind without leaving a single strong impression.

Somewhere he remarks shrewdly that tolerance in some people is merely the measure of their indifference, and I am never sure, after any of Mr. Maugham's books, which of these characteristics is his. That he should savage his characters, as if at first sight his reaction to their originals in life had been a displeased recoil, is not of great importance. We have few enough hard-headed writers in England. In France, where Mr. Maugham is more at home, they do not find a cerebral attitude to character either offensive or uninteresting, and this trait is refreshing in English letters. Malice, sardonic wit, the gaiety of an alert intelligence and the cool scrutiny of the disinterested moralist, are intellectual pleasures which may not have upon us the effect of the greatest imaginative literature, but they do stand out with some well-groomed distinction from the honest sweat which beads the rosy brows of most English novelists. Where Mr.

Maugham falls short is in this: his indifference does lead him to be merely a commentator on character, and the field of his comment is very limited. Preoccupied like so many of his generation seem to have been with the misleading evidence of convention, he has confined himself to debunking the conventional view.

This is an important point because no subject is more interesting to the English middle class. Hence the popularity which has come to a writer who might otherwise have been labelled highbrow and have been unpopular; hence too, Mr. Maugham's dislike of the highbrow writers, his insensibility to Pater, his disapproval of the cultivated, his discomfort before the unpopular. It is true that there is always enough highbrow cant; but there is a no-brow cant, too. It is nonsense to say that a writer who does not become popular in his own time will never be heard of in future generations. Again, his addiction to the comedies and tragedies of convention has led Mr. Maugham to underrate the private sensibility of the English. The Bible may have been wholly bad for latter-day English prose, as he says; but only on the assumption that the English had lost their native romanticism, and only if by the Authorized Version he means such things as the Song of Solomon and not the masterly simplicity of the stories of Ruth or of Samson and Delilah. The best of Hazlitt was a marriage of the conversational simplicity of the eighteenth century, which Mr. Maugham admires, with the warm traditional romanticism of our race; and if one is to distribute blame for the constipated state of English prose to-day, I am not sure that we do not owe it to a debased aping of the Augustans. More than one young writer has had to work Addison out of his system.

Among Mr. Maugham's literary judgments there is plenty to quarrel about—not, indeed, with disapproval but with interest. Some spring from his rather ninety-ish view of t artist as a detached person. Politi he says, ruin creative writers. D they ruin Swift or Defoe? Journalis ruins, too. Did it ruin Defoe, who wro Robinson Crusoe after a lifetime newspapers; or Dickens or Thackera One suspects the detachment that se up this imaginary figure of the pu artist. Is it detachment, or is it real isolation, an affected indifference? M Maugham himself has always bee worried about the supposed incompat bility between living and writing, much so that on the same page t following passages appear:

> "I have never wished to be nothing b a writer; I have wished to live completely

and

> "I have never been able to persuade m self that anything else (besides writing we mattered."

It is an odd comment to come from t enemy of the æsthetes and the highbrow

The Summing Up is not the boo of a happy man. Under its superfici self-possession it reveals a curio rootlessness, pathos and bewilderment but these are kept in their place, o of sight, by Mr. Maugham's warrante pride in his craft, in the accomplishe planning of his career and the candi acceptance of his limitations.

Mr. Maxwell's book calls for litt comment. It is a conventional volun of literary memories, but very readabl lively in anecdote and fresh in i picture of the comfortably off worl at the turn of the century. Somewhe he and Mr. Maugham agree that t present practice whereby novelis review novels is a bad one. So it i But it is due to that decline of pr fessional criticism to the level publicity-writing which Mr. Maugha notes, but which Mr. Maxwell, in t kindly desire to see everyone do we has not observed. Reviewing of nove by novelists is not cricket but it criticism, practically the only criticis there is in the commercialized literar world of to-day.

THE INDIAN OUTLOOK

By L. F. Rushbrook Williams.

INDIAN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHY by Betty Heimann. *George Allen & Unwin.* 5*s.*

GAUTAMA BUDDHA, by Iqbal Singh. *Boriswood.* 15*s.*

INSIDE INDIA, by Halide Edib. *George Allen & Unwin.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER, by K. M. Panikkar. *Oxford University Press.* 18*s.*

It is a matter of observation that peoples are the creatures of their philosophies—sometimes even of their philosophers. Our modern dictators might receive with mixed feelings the assertion that each, in his way, is the embodiment of a Platonic conception, yet such an assertion is not wholly unfounded. One of the most interesting phenomena of our times is the tendency of Western ideas in politics, in science, and in art, to break away from the course consistently pursued since the time of the Greek sophists. Western history has in the main been the product of the view that "man is the measure of all things;" and that knowledge is primarily derived from the application of the human reason to the analysis of phenomena. Are we now reverting to the older cosmic philosophy of the pre-Aristotelian era, which would reduce the individual judgment to a subordinate position when confronted with a totalitarian philosophy of the universe?

It would be tempting, upon the evidence of these four books, to speculate as to the probability of India's ultimate adhesion to either of the political ideologies which now divide the Western world. But such a temptation must be resisted; if only because the typically Indian outlook upon man's position in the universe differs so radically from Western conceptions that arguments from analogy lead only to confusion of thought.

In so far as the basis of Indian thought is essentially cosmic, it might appear that the modern reaction against the anthropological view of the universe would tend to bring the West nearer to the East. But in point of fact, India's collectivism and non-individualism, her relativity of values, and her sense of infinity, belong to a different plane; so that whatever may be the apparent convergence between Eastern and Western thought, they will in fact never meet. In her admirable little book, Dr. Heimann, with her original use of philology, elucidates many of the characteristic conceptions of Indian philosophy. She points out that Indian thought is fundamentally synthetical, depending upon the appreciation of the harmonious functioning of each portion of the great cosmic order. The manner of this functioning is dynamic, a perpetual birth and re-birth which is as true of the gods themselves as of men and other manifestations of life. It is this dynamic principle which underlies the often misunderstood conception of *Maya.* Maya does not signify the illusory character of the universe, as apparent to the senses. This universe is "real" enough empirically; but since every element in it is an emanation from the mass of primeval matter into which it will eventually be re-absorbed, its "reality" is transient, being subject to the operation of the cosmic laws.

It is these same laws which govern the universe of which man is a part; and which, far more than the State or even his fellow-men, control his status within his environment. Man's duty is thus neither to the State, nor to his fellow-men, but to the whole of creation—a conception so wide that in practice it may operate to blur the obligations which in the West are derived from the narrower conception of civic duty. At the same time, the thought of India is essentially practical and empirical in its operation; reluctant to generalize; and distrustful of theory. Deep-rooted in the Indian mind is the idea that discussion is the most effective of all means of research; and that words themselves possess an efficacy which is an integral part of the thing for which they stand. The practical importance of these facts will be obvious to anyone who observed the difficulties experienced by Indians and Englishmen in the course of the Round Table Conferences in arriving at clear understandings.

Mr. Iqbal Singh, though a master of beautiful English, is not adequately equipped either as a historian or as a philosopher. Had he been either, his life of Gautama Buddha would have been as valuable as it is interesting. His defective equipment leads him to suggest in all seriousness that the concept of survival and re-birth was foisted into Gautama's doctrine by his interpreters; and his assessment of Gautama's position is vitiated by his failure to appreciate the strict orthodoxy of Gautama's views in such matters as the subordination of deities to the cosmic order and the futility of endeavouring to explain the ultimateo rigin of the universe instead of comprehending the order of its manifestations. Mr. Iqbal Singh's approach to his subject is fundamentally Western; a characteristic he shares with Halide Edib. Her penetrating study of modern India—a very important book—is remarkable in its objectivity and delicacy of perception. The careful critic will discern in her pages, as in Mr. Iqbal Singh's, some minor historical errors; and will wish that she also had provided herself with a backgroun of traditional Hindu thought. In th view of the present writer, she under estimates the enormous vitality o Hindu culture; and attaches excessiv importance to the influence, which ma be quite transitory, of Western materialism as an element in India' destinies. This is the more strange i view of her recognition that so essen tially Western a culture as that o Islam has, in India, been profoundl modified by Hindu contacts, whil leaving them almost unaffected. As a consequence, although her observation are careful, her conclusions are nebulous.

Mr. Panikkar's book is of more than ordinary interest; for it provides a vivid picture of the functioning o Hindu Kingship under modern con ditions. *Dharma* has been the inspira tion of the Maharaja of Bikaner through all his notable activities for his State his country, and the Commonwealth A culture which can to-day provide th philosophical outlook of such a figur as His Highness need not entertain— and indeed does not entertain—any apprehensions as to its own survival.

L. F. Rushbrook Williams.

THE SILENT SOCIAL REVOLUTION by G. A. N. Lowndes. *Oxford University Press.* 6*s.*

In describing the expansion of public education in England and Wales during the last forty years in a small book that is at once exact and readable, Mr Lowndes has done well. The older generation will find in it clear proof o progress. The younger folk who are naturally and rightly impatient with anything short of Utopia may perhaps see that educational reform, to be useful and popular, must take time. Mr Lowndes first sketches the position reached by 1895, when elementary schools had been provided for al children under the Act of 1870 and the horrid system of "payment by results" was dropped. Illiteracy was vanishing but the schools were primitive, the children could leave at eleven, and there was little provision of education

above Standard VII. The Board did not yet exist. One department looked after the School Boards and the elementary schools, another encouraged some science and art teaching, while the Board of Agriculture subsidized agricultural classes and the Charity Commission kept an eye on the endowed schools. Politically, education was not a live issue. Neither party cared to embitter the feud between the supporter, of the Church Schools and the Nonconformists who favoured the rate-aided Board Schools.

Mr. Balfour's Education Act of 1902 changed the whole outlook. Only a resolute and trusted Prime Minister could have piloted so far-reaching a measure to the Statute-book, in defiance of School Boards and Nonconformist consciences and with none too much help from Churchmen. Once that political revolution was effected, the County Councils showed themselves eager to use their new powers to provide elementary, secondary, technical and higher education. Mr. Lowndes suggests with good reason that the generation which had benefited by the elementary schools welcomed the promise of still better things for their children, whatever politicians might think or say. Under the new Board of Education, with Sir Robert Morant at its head, progress was thenceforward rapid—so rapid indeed that the average man has not kept pace with it and will be grateful for the author's lucid summary up to the Act of 1936. The development of the elementary schools with their medical service is not more remarkable than the organization of secondary, technical and higher grade, and since the Hadow report of 1926, of "senior" schools which make the educational ladder climbable for the poorest children who have talent. Mr. Lowndes describes the recent advances most clearly and helpfully. Older readers who know anything of our present schools can testify that the contrast which he draws between the children of to-day and those of 1895 is not exaggerated. A silent social revolution has indeed taken place, and the country is infinitely the better for it. The schools have raised the standard of public health, have broken down the old barriers of caste and have made for decency and order in the roughest districts. The intellectual results cannot so easily be assessed as yet but must already be considerable. We need not now fear comparison with any other country in respect of education, though forty years ago we were very far behind.

The only forbidding feature of Mr. Lowndes' fascinating book is the series of folding graphs which he has mistakenly included.

EDWARD G. HAWKE.

POTEMKIN, by George Soloveytchik. *Thornton Butterworth.* 18*s*.

This publication is accompanied by a document which is apparently designed, by gentle promptings, to enable the least intelligent of critics to write an adequate review without the necessity for any knowledge of his subject or any but the most cursory perusal of the book. It is hard to believe that a series of stereotyped comments can be either helpful or flattering to the author; and the puff in question will have done an ill service to anyone who has thereby felt relieved from the pleasant task of reading this interesting and well-balanced work.

Potemkin constitutes an almost perfect subject for a biographer who can handle an intricate historical subject without either Teutonic dullness or Transatlantic flummery. The subject is vast: but it is illuminated by the dazzling personality of the hero himself. The great historical events unroll their sequence before a background of incredible extravagance, splendour, and eccentricity. Perhaps by reason of his origin, Mr. Soloveytchik excels in dealing with the character of Catherine the Great and the strange habits of her aristocracy. Among so much that is scarcely credible, it would have been easy to exaggerate: among so much that is barbaric, it would have been easy to lament and moralize.

Mr. Soloveytchik lets the facts speak for themselves. His picture of the life and behaviour of the Russian nobles of the eighteenth century is very vivid: however reprehensible the state of affairs may have been, it is extremely amusing.

Potemkin himself, apart from being born into the officer class, was entirely a self-made man. At the age of twenty-three he played a minor part in the *coup d'état* by which Catherine seized the throne. At the age of thirty-four he became Catherine's lover. From that time until his death, he remained and was recognized as the most powerful man in Russia, during a period which extended from the beginning of the American Revolution to the beginning of the French Revolution.

Mr. Soloveytchik is very much concerned to prove, what no other writer has so far advanced, that Potemkin and Catherine were secretly married. This may be an interesting genealogical fact, but it throws no light one way or the other on their relations. The Empress had had one husband already, whom she had put away without much ado. Whatever it was that bound her to Potemkin, it was not her respect for the sanctity of the marriage tie. Yet it is astonishing that he and he alone succeeded in maintaining his political influence over her after the physical union had been severed. At an early stage in their connection, he had the sense to see that for two such highly temperamental people, the bed-chamber was the worst of all possible places for the transaction of the affairs of an Empire. Thereafter he kept Catherine supplied with a relay of lovers, chosen and when necessary removed by himself; while she allowed and even encouraged him to pursue affairs with a multitude of women, and most notably with his own five nieces.

That such a relation should last for long would be strange in any circumstances: but it is amazing when, as their letters show, they were to the very end, and on both sides equally, madly in love. It lasted for one reason only. In her semi-divine position, with her unbounded power, Catherine seldom came into contact with men who ha no private ends to gain. But Potemki was entirely selfless. He loved her f herself, and he loved his country. H was a mystic, deeply absorbed in religio His wordly possessions and honou were a cause of misery to him; he use to weep over his responsibilities an power, and gambled away his reward like chaff. The less he sought, the mo was given to him: provinces, palace commands. He used to demand ther as evidences of his mistress' love but he used them entirely for her service So also it was to him, who was utterl oblivious of his own personal appearance that every woman gave her heart.

Such natures are rare and complex Potemkin baffled even the astute Lor Malmesbury, who mistook him s completely as to offer him a bribe. H has a little mystified the painstakin Mr. Soloveytchik, who is not quit convinced of anything beyond the fac that his hero was a genius. Hi administrative achievements prove tha much. But Potemkin was somethin more unusual still, he was an example o the wholly disinterested man.

CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUS

ESCAPE ON SKIS, by Brian Meredith *Hurst & Blackett.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The mood of this book, bright joyous, keen and wholly exhilarating is well attuned to the subject. Mr Brian Meredith is a young Canadia who as a journalist dabbled in th subject of ski-ing and became co-edito of the Canada Ski Year Book. W travel with him 'way down West, for a thoroughly enjoyable ski-in expedition in the Rockies, then through the sophisticated "dinner-jacket" centres of Switzerland. The two atmospheres are well contrasted, and while the reader will search in vain fo instruction, there is scarcely a dull page in a highly personal narrative: thu even the compound and unanalysable emotions of this twentieth-century ecstasy are capable of being recaptured in tranquility. There is a pleasant foreword by the Right Hon. L. S Amery.

W.H.C.

HUNGARY AND HER SUCCESSORS, by C. A. Macartney. *Oxford University Press.* 25*s.*

Perhaps one day this book may serve its real purpose. That is, to act as a collection of evidence and an expert's opinion on the real justification for the often advocated "local revisions" of the frontiers laid down by the Treaty of Trianon. For Mr. Macartney has little patience with so-called "historical rights": real justification of revision, and indeed of the original partition of the Austro-Hungarian territories, as he sees it, is to be found only in the wishes of the peoples concerned, tempered by a proper regard for the economic welfare of the majority and the desirability of a sure foundation for the political stability of the area as a whole.

So the propagandists of either side in this eighteen-year-old agitation will not get much ammunition out of Mr. Macartney. To give only one or two little instances: he must have created a mighty annoyance to the Czechs in allotting back to Hungary (power-politics aside) practically the whole of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, even though he underlines severely the necessity for guarantees of autonomy if such a thing came to pass; he must have annoyed Rumanian propagandists by exploding the validity of their claim to a frontier line West of Oradea Mare, and by deciding for a line, roughly, following the watershed of the Bihar and Meszes ranges behind the strip of plain at present occupied by Rumania; he must have dealt a blow to Hungarian sentiments by arguing conclusively against any partition of Transylvania in favour of the Székely districts returning to Hungary, and to Hungarian delusions in respect of the Croats by his very definite account of the real state of Croat national sentiment.

In short, Mr. Macartney pays no attention at all to chauvinistic claims: indeed, in the historical sections of this book, he deals as severely with Magyar arrogance of superiority and all its consequences as ever did Scotus Viator to whom he refers very often in due acknowledgment of his authority on the subject.

But the day when these questions of revision have to be considered practically is not yet even in sight on the horizon of politics. Quite apart from this book's value as a fresh and dispassionate estimate of the validity of the claims which went to the drafting of the Treaty of Trianon, and quite apart from its immense potential value if revision ever did come to be discussed, the material on which the author bases his conclusions makes up a volume of the greatest interest on the present state of the peoples of the former Hungarian kingdom—the effects of the great partition. Mr. Macartney is extremely thorough, sacrifices nothing in his writing to effect (though he contrives little effects of his own occasionally) and has made an extremely complete survey of that fascinating patchwork of striving peoples in the middle Danube basin. The astonishing thing is that he has been able to accomplish the work in the three years since he produced his last book on *National States and National Minorities*, even though work on that must have brought him into contact with many problems of this latter book. He has included sections not only on the economics of the various regions, the effects of the sudden revolution of their markets and supplies, the economic policies of the Succession States and of post-War Hungary herself, but he even attempts to gauge the political feeling among the minorities and the majorities. (This is a far more difficult task than it sounds in semi-illiterate countries, where the vociferous sections of populations are not necessarily representative of the general state of opinion.)

Transylvania, for example, shows an administration rotten to the core, corrupt and backward to a degree scarcely imaginable, a population with elements of regional cohesion in it, an economy that has been exploited by the Regat, a natural richness of resources which has been a gain to the central and eastern regions and a loss to the western districts. Yugoslavia shows the

bitterest national strivings on a background of a richness of soil and abundance of resources out of which no shifting of markets has been able to mask the utter misery of extreme economic distress. Slovakia, Ruthenia and the Burgenland are similarly illustrated, and the detail is both fascinating and essential to the student of the region. On the data available (not always very rich) Mr. Macartney has written a sane and scholarly book such as those countries of argument and propaganda and half-truth thoroughly deserve.

RALPH. MURRAY.

GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH, by M. Willson Disher. *Bell.* 15*s.*

This is a history of the life of Astley's Amphitheatre, which used to stand at the junction of Westminster Bridge and Stangate, and of those vivid striving showmen who were managers and entertainers there. For a dramatic critic to write a book without one word of criticism is a rare achievement. The method is research, with plenty of time allowed for jolly anecdote. Mr. Disher tacitly realizes that he is not dealing with an artistic form but with the earthy though richly-humoured career of popular entertainment. Nor yet is his book a social document. It is the chronicle of a vigorous fragment of nineteenth-century life.

It opens with Philip Astley, who ran away from a Staffordshire carpentry bench to fight the French in the Prussian alliance at Emsdorf in George II.'s last year, gain the rank of sergeant-major at nineteen, become the most famous horseman and showman in London, and undertake the conquest of France again, in a different sense and with the skill and grace of his son to help, just before the Revolution. Mr. Disher in his zeal pardonably exaggerates the extent of English yeast in the ferment that blew up the Bastille; his theory is more interesting that persistent representation of Napoleon in circuses later increased the contempt for the restored Bourbon and Orleans monarchies in this country and dissatisfaction with them in Franc Astley must have been a charact exactly portrayable by Mr. W. C Fields. He has bequeathed a host remarks, of which "These here hors eat most vociferously" is the best.

Other figures parade in an array costume: Andrew Ducrow, who coul perform any act or write any equestria piece, and who made while watching rehearsal of *Hamlet* that immort observation about "cutting the dialec and coming to the 'osses"; "Napoleon Gomersal, marching night after nigh to Moscow and Waterloo "Methuselah" Widdicomb, an aristc crat even among ring-masters; dazzlin Louisa Woolford, whose picture inspire more collectors than an entire revu chorus; Adah Isaac Menken, who tool husbands by the season, rode a Mazeppa in that perennial piece, an won a wager from Rossetti by callin on Swinburne and stopping the night The entry of Lord George Sanger an some of his travelling troupe lik Pimpo brings to most of us presen memories; but Astley's had closed fo ever in 1893.

The narrative is rapid, colourfu painstaking, objective, never psycholo gical. Without being callous, Mr Disher does not dwell on disaster o close chapters with it; destructive fires and grave injuries are ingredient of the mixture, not banquets fo moralists. Thus he escapes the bo which has sucked in many writers abou the stage, who present fun-maker always as figures of tragedy, killed fo their sport by the gods. He does no overlook that quiet courage by whic Astley, Ducrow, Sanger, built up thei ventures when hope had often to serv as cash, rivalry with other theatre was a biting spur, and projects wer caged by entertainment law. This is picture of old London as Boz an Thackeray knew it. Oranges in th Old Vic gallery, vegetable barrows i the New Cut, are symbols still of tha mingled squalor and heartiness tha once overspread the entire Surrey side.

ALAN PHILLIPS.

SPANISH TESTAMENT, by Arthur Koestler. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

CATALONIA INFELIX, by E. Allison Peers. *Methuen.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

SPANISH REHEARSAL, by Arnold Lunn. *Hutchinson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

WHY SPAIN FIGHTS ON, by Louis Fischer. *Union of Democratic Control.* 6*d.*

The Spanish struggle has been too much presented to English readers as a clash of two rival ideologies which bear scant relation to the real forces, complex and haphazard, at work in the Peninsula. There are, however, signs that the day of books revealing the "truth about Spain" by authors who themselves only began to explore that truth towards 1937 is almost over.

Of the books here reviewed, Mr. Koestler's best exemplifies this realist tendency, and is the most valuable. He devotes, it is true, several chapters to the origins of the civil war, but it is on the whole an accurate exposition and follows, or perhaps inaugurates, recent fashion, by rightly stressing the importance of the agricultural problem. While agreeing with Mr. Koestler's main thesis, I feel bound to point out one or two exaggerations or inaccuracies. Thus, it is misleading to impute the blocking of Agrarian Reform in 1933 to "a highly organized plan of sabotage on the part of the big landowners" without mentioning the landowners' contention that the higher scale of wages imposed made the working of arable land uneconomic. It would have been enough to have charged the Spanish governing caste with inertia and mulishness, without accusing it of a "policy of blackmail" difficult to prove. Again, the number of political prisoners after the rising of October, 1934, was given by left-wing Spaniards as 30,000—not 40,000.

But *Spanish Testament* is more than justified by the chapters describing the fall of Málaga and the author's subsequent imprisonment under sentence of death. As the only foreign journalist to remain in Málaga, Mr. Koestler was in a unique position to observe the incompetence of the defending command, the entry of Italian troops, and the summary mass executions which followed. His own experiences in the condemned cell, though their interest is chiefly personal, furnish a valuable side-light on insurgent methods, and particularly on their treatment of journalists.

Professor Allison Peers works briefly over the history of Catalonia before coming to a more detailed review of recent developments seen from the standpoint which he adopted in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and which is summed up in the following lines :

> "For five months (*i.e.*, February-July, 1936) the Right looked on helplessly at the complete failure of the Government to deal with the excesses of their extremists or with those of its own. In mid-July the Army could stand it no longer. Garrisons, police and civil guardsmen rose all over Spain; the extremists, responding to the call of the Government and the commands of their own leaders, took arms to resist them."

BOOK BARGAINS

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The statement is at once confusing and too simple. It attaches "extremists" to both sides, then rallies them all to the Government. It suggests to the uninformed reader an Olympian army whereas the real army was deeply involved in, and partly responsible for, the political unrest preceding the "Movement."

But the book will prove useful as a factual account of events in Catalonia up to the middle of 1937. Two of the author's conclusions seem questionable: first, that it would have been possible to restrain the violent reaction of the Catalan people after they had overcome what they believed to be an attack on their dearest liberties made not only by the Army but by all the Right-wing forces, including the Church; secondly, that a victory of the Left in the present war would mean the extinction of Catalan hopes of autonomy.

With Mr. Arnold Lunn we leave the journalist's trained observation and the Hispanic specialist's reasoned narrative and enter a realm of pure fantasy. *Spanish Rehearsal* has little relevance to any Spain that exists or has existed. It is animated by a strong Catholic anti-Communist bias, and its author appears to see in any supporter of the Government an enemy of Western civilization. His material is drawn from a three-week tour of Franco territory under the guidance of insurgent press officers, and the writings of a number of English newspaper correspondents, together with publicists whose competence in Spanish affairs had so far gone unrecognized. Mr. Lunn is a polemical writer of no mean ability. It is a pity that he has wasted his virtuosity by barking so agilely up the wrong tree.

In conjunction with *Spanish Rehearsal* should be read Mr. Fischer's pamphlet. Written with strong Left-wing bias, it supplies the answer to many of Mr. Lunn's charges. It, again, has the defect of over-simplifying the issue, but it contains much reliable, though selected, information.

GEOFFREY BRERETON.

THE PASQUIER CHRONICLES, Georges Duhamel. *Dent.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The French novel is frequently slight in matter as in bulk, but t *Pasquier Chronicles*, first published their five parts in the *Mercure France*, becomes a veritable omnib with the inclusion in the Engli translation of Books IV and V. picks up its passengers in 1890 and it soon clear that Laurent, his fathe mother and four brothers and siste are in for a hard buffetting as th bump down the years, escaping o difficulty immediately to be caught another; emerging into the spacio prospect of the twentieth century wi the middle-aged father only ju qualified as a medical practitioner y struggling to bring up a family accor ing to notions stamped by his ow eccentric individualism into a bac ground of bourgeois convention.

"Come, come, sir, put on your hat do I go about showing my knees? And for a moment one sees Raymon Pasquier as a remonstrative Johnsonia figure expressing himself to hatle bald-heads with the same force an openness which gain him the respe of his family, his landlord and a who warren of flat-dwellers in the *impas Vandamme*. Stability is there in th mother, a resourceful, courageous an unselfish woman, who patiently endur the agony of waiting for a legacy whic is tied up at Havre, a town so much o the minds of the family that one day s school Laurent replies to a questio from his geography master by sayin "Havre, monsieur, oh, Havre is whe the lawyer lives."

The author never lingers unnecessaril on any single phase of the Pasqui saga. Incident crowds on inciden and the canvas is filled in with suc detail and colour that one canno afford to skip any of the 850 pages of translation which seldom falters i rendering that vivid but delicate trea ment of the commonplace which is special virtue of Georges Duhame Yet the Pasquiers who are made to li with such vigour and depth of emotio

their everyday life are an unfailing source of surprise. Raymond especially A somewhat uncomfortable father to ave," is the opinion of Justin Weill, aurent's Jewish friend. The remark justified when the complaint that oo much water is being used rouses aymond to burying an enormous hopper in the main supply pipe just o give the landlord "something real o worry about."

That is the reaction of a highly ndividualized type of Frenchman in he Paris of thirty years ago. (His nodern counterpart has a rather ifferent approach. He believes in the ffectiveness of unions and sit-down trikes.) Laurent and his friends are ounger members of that generation, ne which, it seems, could tell the older thing or two about companies that pring up for the exploitation of incan-escent gas. But Laurent lives on opes which prove almost as poor an nvestment as his father's shares in the ncanda-Finska. An experiment is nade in working a printing press on a ommunal basis in the suburbs of Paris. The group is in general agree-nent with one of their number, Senac, who detests the Clemenceau régime, s convinced that another war is coming it is 1906) and asks one thing of ociety, "that we shall damn well be eft in peace."

But "mutual peace and toleration" s doomed to failure even within the imits of this society. Hard individual ffort gives way to pottering and in-ffective work. One feels that Ray-nond's daughter, Cécile, a genius of a ianist who has been practising at the ide of an admiring tutor and has now von fame is perhaps the answer to those who would substitute communal ndeavour for intensive individual work. And she like the rest of them, Joseph who makes a success in business, Laurent too, are held fast by family ies. It is in revealing their loves, uarrels and worries, inter-related as hese are shown to be, that the author xcels. For although one may know he Paris of the Ritz Bar, the Opera nd Auteuil, or again the life of the Boulevard Montparnasse and the student haunts around the Luxembourg and the Boul' Mich', it is only one who is himself a Pasquier who could draw so fine a picture of a Parisian family as Georges Duhamel has done. The trials of these people have given them strength and confidence to withstand any shock which may come to their country whether from an internal or external source.

MICHAEL LANGLEY.

CASTLE CORNER, by Joyce Cary. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

STRANGERS, by Claude Houghton. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

THE BROTHERS, by H. G. Wells. *Chatto & Windus.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

THIS MAN MURRAY, by William Corcoran. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Each of these novels is well worth reading, and taken together they represent most of the merits and the failings of contemporary fiction. Mr. Joyce Cary continues the spacious and exuberant chronicle of the last century, Mr. Claude Houghton writes in the romantic psychological manner that matured in the post-war period, Mr. Wells frankly uses the novel as a clumsy but engaging set-piece to carry the Wellsian fireworks, and Mr. Corcoran's medium is the neo-simplicity of the younger Americans.

Mr. Cary's *Castle Corner* portrays the landed gentry and the peasantry of the Victorian age against a background of Ireland, England and West Africa. It is an elaborate panorama in which fresh characters continually appear, and the fecundity of Mr. Cary's portraiture is delightful. In the Irish scenes Mr. Cary displays some of Dostoevsky's skill in rendering the whole dynamic movement of a community, a comparison which is heightened by the "Russian" relationship between the gentry and their servants. Subsequently the book seems to lack an inner core of action. The centre of gravity is continually shifting. Secondary and tertiary characters are over-elaborated, the book loses momentum, and the whole narra-

tive breaks up into an episodic miscellany. What lingers in the memory is the brilliance of single isolated scenes, when Mr. Cary comes to a standstill and distils a haunting poetic quality from some small incident. *Castle Corner* is a rich and abundant material, sufficient for half a dozen novels, which diffuses from its structural defects into a string of exquisite sketches; but the maturity, the objective penetration and the lively feeling of Mr. Cary's style give the whole book an uncommon distinction. Incidentally, when *Castle Corner* is reprinted, the wholesale muddle over inverted commas should be corrected and Mr. Cary might reconsider twenty pounds as the six-months weight of a " small " and " very thin " baby.

By comparison with Mr. Cary, Mr. Houghton's prose is villainous. Neither his eye nor his ear seems to have had any part in the writing of *Strangers*. His idiom is grey and lifeless, and there is no action which has any significance in itself. Mr. Houghton's drama is a reflex on the other side of action, beginning at the point where reflection supersedes objective behaviour. The plot is the simple one of a business-man seducing a mannequin, which Mr. Houghton transposes wholly into the subjective world of the man. It makes an interesting psychological study, and Mr. Houghton does at times succeed in extracting considerable power from his ponderous and turbid methods. Nevertheless, the book is vitiated by the kind of falsity which springs from an imperfect definition of the characters. The wife is a block of wood, the mannequin is pretty well drugged with an overdose of exalted romanticism, and the husband plunges about in a subjective state which lacks any constant validity. A mass of smart chat and unnecessary travelogue swells the book to dropsical dimensions. Yet in spite of everything Mr. Houghton does succeed in holding on grimly to a difficult and interesting theme.

Mr. Wells's *The Brothers* is as contemptuous of its medium as only Mr. Wells can be. Its central theme is a conversation between the respect leaders of fascist and commun parties during a civil war. T conversation is mounted in a framew of incident so preposterous that of the characters is impelled to s " It's as impossible as the *Com of Errors*. It's *Prisoner of Ze* romance." In other words, *Brothers* is quite pointless unless is interested in Mr. Wells's thesis ab Red-Black politics. This thesis is t the apparent differences between two parties are spurious and wo disappear if they read H. G. We The argument is developed w characteristic gusto and is not fun unless one believes that Mr. Wells never understood the motivation human behaviour. The celebra Wellsian Woman flits about in background, and altogether the bo revives many happy memories Victorian liberalism.

Mr. Corcoran's *This Man Mur* gives the measure of the distance wh divides Mr. Wells from the you novelists of the present day. Mur is an American artisan who sees fiancée killed, subsequently mar and then has his home broken up unemployment. It is a simple sto and Mr. Corcoran keeps within essential simplicity. Unlike Houghton, he does not inflate subjectively; unlike Mr. Wells, does not use it as a rough scaffoldi for more portentous utterances. style is plain, objective, unlitera deliberately naïve, in the man generally associated with Hemingw Mr. Corcoran writes with the speaki voice, and his method will dee affect an audience accustomed artificial conventions which ha become worn and hackneyed. *T Man Murray* has the freshness a novelty of all that is unselfconscio It is a demotic literature, touched w a quiet sentiment, appealing direc to the heart's simplicity. There is reason that is not pathological w Fiction should ever descend below t level.

DESMOND HAWKINS.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

For the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY *public.*

The mould of the nineteenth century, when Great Britain was supreme, is rapidly dissolving, and in the transition period which must precede the evolution of a new cosmos it is, inevitably, old England that, more than other nations, is at a loss to get her bearings. New problems confront her statesmen, new issues obtrude themselves upon a bewildered public opinion, and with her set ideas rooted in the era of industrial expansion, with her essentially aristocratic traditions, she finds it peculiarly difficult to adjust her mode of life to the new conditions.

For some pertinent home truths about agriculture, for example, we have recourse this month to **Professor R. G. Stapledon, C.B.E.,** who has made a niche for himself by his studies on grass and grasslands, quoted and accepted as authoritative all over the world. Professor Stapledon holds the chair of Agricultural Botany at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and since 1919 he has also been Director of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station. During the War he was appointed Director of the first Seed Testing Station established under the Food Production Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. His views on agricultural policy were set forth cogently in *The Land: Now and To-morrow* (1935).

It is a commonplace to say that in the age of the aeroplane England has ceased to be an island. Of course the psychological implications of the change have hardly begun to work themselves out. But at the time of Italy's forthright dispositions on the eve of her Abyssinian campaign our Admiralty, at least, had cause to regret their facile contempt for the air weapon. The strategy of the Mediterranean is indeed transformed, and the ready assistance lent to General Franco's cause by Italy has made plenty of mischief in the Mediterranean. **Air-Commodore L. E. O. Charlton,** who treats this subject, has a distinguished career behind him: service with distinction (he won the D.S.O.) in the South African War and in the Great War; Air Attaché, British Embassy, Washington, 1919-22; Chief Staff Officer, Iraq Command, 1923-24—when he resigned as a protest against the air control bombing operations. He has come to the front since as the foremost exponent of the air age and its immense implications—in the political, strategical, and psychological spheres. His latest book, *The Menace of the Clouds* (William Hodge) is an admirable primer of the subject. Readers may recal the article he contributed to this REVIEW last June on new aspects of defence—under the title "Gas and Gulls."

Henry Buckley writes with knowledge and sound sense on the political background of the amazing transformation of loyalist Spain. Now correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* in Madrid, he has worked as a journalist in the country for some ten years, and, except for short periods of leave has been on duty in Madrid, Valencia or Barcelona ever since the beginning of the civil war. There are few writing about Spain to-day who know her politics and her people as well as Henry Buckley.

Recent events in Germany have confounded the prophets who assumed

that, whatever the antics of the Party leaders "on top," the *Reichswehr* was the power that held the trumps. Special interest, therefore, attaches to the study of the German Army Officer which we are able to publish—by one who has had unusual opportunities of a close-up view. "Haruspex" was the appellation of the soothsayer of Roman times whose function it was to predict the future from the quality of the entrails of the beasts of sacrifice! He was the counterpart of the "augur," a name not unknown as a *nom de plume* in this review.

Lionel M. Gelber is a Canadian, a former Rhodes scholar at Balliol, who is perturbed, like so many of us, by the ugly and menacing situation in Europe, but who believes that the situation can still be saved if only Britain remains true to her own special *rôle* as pivot of the European balance of power. Another contributor whom we welcome from the Dominions is **Professor F. L. W. Wood,** who holds the chair of History at Victoria College, Wellington, New Zealand. His account of the country's progress is highly encouraging to those of us who welcome the twentieth-century phenomenon of the welfare-State.

Like F. L. W. Wood, **J. B. Condliffe** was born in Australia, and his early teaching experience was, similarly, in New Zealand. He was Professor of Economics at Canterbury College, 1920-26. During the next decade he held appointments succe sively as Research Secretary of th Institute of Pacific Relations and as member of the Economic Intelligen Section of the League of Nation Geneva. He is now Universit Professor of Commerce, London Scho of Economics, thus being for the fir time (except his undergraduate da at Cambridge) domiciled in this countr No more authoritative and unprejudice witness to the van Zeeland Repo could have been found

The name of **Helen Simpson** is know to a wide public, in Australia, whe she hailed from originally, in Ameri and in England. One of her novel *Boomerang*, obtained the James Ta Black Memorial prize in 1932. Bu she is so very much more than novelist. Among her—admitted—re reations are collecting books on witc craft and cooking: and out of th strange lore she has given us a delightf commentary on the cookery of Samu Pepys' age.

Montgomery Belgion, essayist an amateur philosopher, takes up the eve present theme of "propaganda" an shows that one of the salient chara teristics of our time is the developme of veiled publicity.

Finally, **E. R. Sarv** pays a bri tribute to one of the vigorous litt countries of the Baltic which has ju celebrated its twentieth anniversar He is the London representative of th newspaper *Uus Eesti*, Tallinn.

THE FORTNIGHTLY BAZAAR

From Our Dumb Friends' League, a society working hard at this moment for the success of the Performing Animals (Regulation) Bill, now before Parliament, we have received some valuable literature. The Bill has been designed to prohibit the entry of any animal for training over the age of six months, thus barring the entry of the animal trained abroad. It is of particular interest to readers of THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW that a staunch supporter of this Bill is Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, formerly Secretary of the Zoological Gardens, and, incidentally, a candidate for the Scottish Universities at the recent by-election. The result of that by-election was not known to us at the time of writing these notes. Readers of Mr. Koestler's recent book, *Spanish Testament* or of Sir Peter's own book, *My House in Malaga* will realize what great weight his opinion carries. Sir Peter has said of performing animals that " there is the greatest possible risk that there has been cruelty, not only in training the animal, but continuous cruelty in keeping the animal up to the mark for these—what may be called—fixed time performances . . ." The main objects of the Bill are to prohibit the training and public exhibition of dogs, seals, monkeys, apes and baboons as well as the animal trained abroad, also to extend to the duly appointed representatives of accredited Humane Societies, the right under the Performing Animals (Regulations) Act, 1925, to inspect premises used for training and to attend performances and exhibition of performing animals and inspect performing animals. Also to make particulars of registration under the Act of 1925 more readily available for public inspection. It is hoped in this way to ensure that in future no animals which may be trained and exhibited as performing animals are so trained or exhibited unless they are born in this country and to provide machinery for ensuring that the objects of the Act of 1925 and of the Bill are fulfilled. Mrs. E. A. Pinto-Leite, who has done magnificent work for her cause as Chairman of the Political Committee, appeals for help of every kind from those in sympathy with " Our Dumb Friends' League." Contributions and offers of assistance should be sent to the Secretary, Grosvenor Gardens House, Victoria, S.W.1.

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Lord Aberdare, Chairman of the National Fitness Council, will open, on Wednesday, March 2nd, an Exhibition entitled " Health, Sport and Fitness," which has been organized by the Royal Institute of British Architects at their headquarters, 66, Portland Place, W.1. The Exhibition will remain open until March 31st and will then go on tour of the principal cities and towns of England. The Exhibition is founded on the idea that everybody's health is everybody's else's business, and that the individual has to be helped to health and fitness. The needs of health are met by adequate nutrition, properly planned facilities for sport and recreation, efficiently organized health services, but chiefly by living and working conditions that themselves create health. The R.I.B.A. hold that good planning saves doctors' bills. They also hold that good design in town, building and open spaces are vital to both the mental and physical well-being of the ordinary man.

To keep pace with the rapidly changing events of modern life it has bee decided to issue an Encyclopædia Britannica Year Book annually, so th an up-to-date diary of current economic, scientific and political developmen may be available. The first of these is to appear early in April and t contributors will include among others :—Sir Noel Ashbridge, Dr. Erne Baker formerly Director, University of London School of Librarianship, S Charles Bressey, Professor E. H. Carr, attached to the British Delegation t the Peace Conference, 1919, Sir Walter Citrine, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, M Cleveland Fife, General Secretary National Farmers' Union, Mr. Eric Gi the Rt. Hon. Douglas Hacking, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, Dean Inge, D R. R. Kuczynski, Maj. Gen. Sir R. McCarrison, Lord Meston, Professo Picard, Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, Sir John Reith, Sir Josiah Stam Prof. R. S. Troup and Sir Kingsley Wood. Being produced under th editorship in this country of Mrs. Margaret Dorothy Law, a graduate o Girton College, Cambridge, it will appear simultaneously with a speci American edition under the editorship of Mr. Franklin Hooper to whom Mr Law is acting as associate for the English edition.

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Light and Dark, the magazine for Oxford and Cambridge, published monthl price sixpence, has just celebrated its first birthday. It contains an excelle variety of articles with verse and poetry of an unusually high order. Edmun Blunden, Frederic Prokosch, and Tom Harrison, are among the contributors.

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Not long ago we drew attention in these notes to Ashridge College, Herts We now have to announce that, owing to ill-health, Major-Genera Sir Reginald Hoskins has recently resigned the appointment of Principal, position which he had held since 1929 when the College was first opened. Th Governors have appointed to succeed him Mr. Eric J. Patterson, M.A., Hea of the Department of International Politics at the University of the South West of England.